Marcel Ray Duriez

Nevaeh

Book: 78

Passed November

Part:

Bizarre coruscations they said to me, as I remember, it is not the dead that we need to fear, it is the living yet by the end of nothing more than being a soul I would think not.

Life has its stages, working hard in school as a young child, being a teen that dislikes everything that your mom and dad say, to work less than a bum, a tramp, a vagrant. A lazy or shiftless person, especially one who seeks to live solely with the support of others.

An incompetent, insignificant, or obnoxious person: The batter called the pitcher a bum. One who spends a lot of time doing a particular recreational activity at achievements, then there are the stages of young lust and love, and the disappointment, of having it and not, then they're seeing others move forward more than yourself, then there is working like a crazy with your college degrees, then know that the next stage is playing house, find the one in a stage of babies, cars, and homes and investments, and then older age creeps up on you and you feel lost looking down say where did the time go?

Then it is having a 5-year-old, and then 10, then 18, and you are a grandparent, and the stages start anew, a year goes past November, then December and the year is lost to time and age, then the comfort of death is the only thing keeping you alive as death consumes your body within and then shows on the outside.

All the days, I and we think that we remember. I remember when everyone was jabbed with the vaccine and those that did not have all parched now, in the times of biological war. I wonder what was worse. Though away kids' trough away life, through away society

everything ended with jabbing needles in arms all death.

Reliving the past-

November- Do you remember? In the street, where people meet. We would wander around in the springtime heat. Do you remember? Clipping wings until you are thirty.

Every morning we would still be yarning,

All these days are gone all alone. I wish I had you near me, I need you here all night long until the light through the window is gone. All summer long. Said

another day had come until the fall, days were lazy...

...And sometimes drive us all crazy. All these days are gone all alone, I had you near me. I wish I had you here. In the street where we would meet, wander around in the northern heat. Do you remember? Do you remember?

...Every morning, every night...

Still yawning. The good old days and long nights we spent together cannot be forgotten, I cannot forget. We cannot forget changes in time spent together.

I still remember. The days passed in November.

~*~

Jaylynn

Jaylynn- That is the title of my autobiography, the aroma of a toilet. My eardrums are not your toilet. Clown Court Jester is the sum-up of life or the kid's first instance of the rainbow ball pits falling headfirst. I am in the world of having the checkerboard black and white flag. Black and white clothing, whether stripes or checkered, is the girl clown of the modern day, which has to do with the dual way that many celebrities live, often toggling between their regular life and slave life.

Diamond has to do with the 'Presidential Model' and the highest level for sex slaves. Handlers are mysterious

and shadowy controllers, sometimes pretending to be security or entourage to stay close to the victim and better control their every action. They control their slave victim with certain code words, code names, and triggers, which brings out certain alters that do certain jobs under a different personality.

They keep celebrities isolated from others. Celebrities sometimes switch to other alters on live television because certain triggers or codewords are used, which takes this celebrity to a different personality, ready to perform certain actions.

Beta Sex Kitten alters have to do with dressing like a wildcat, often tiger, leopard, or lion. Moreover, Mickey Mouse's ears and MK-Ultra Disney also symbolize MK-Ultra's mind control.

Disney movies and shows are filled with dark symbolism, including cartoon movies. One eye bigger than the other, or bleaching hair to platinum blonde color or wearing a platinum blonde wig.

Monarch Butterflies symbolism, mostly placed in a subliminal manner so that it blends into the background as well as does not appear as obvious. Mirrors, especially cracked or shattered mirrors,

have to do with shattered and fractured personalities created by traumatic mind control. Such trauma leads to eventual breakdown or meltdown, around 27 or 28, and they start rebelling from their handler.

They are likely to go into Rehab for MK-Ultra mind control trauma-induced acts to make them obey.

I remember being called the prima donna a very temperamental person with an inflated view of their talent or importance.

Cut-

‘If you are going to be stupid, be increasingly, impressively stupid. Be brilliantly stupid.’

Remembering my meetings for my education: Autism is a neurodevelopmental condition of variable severity with lifelong effects that can be recognized from early childhood, chiefly characterized by difficulties with social interaction and communication and by restricted or repetitive patterns of thought and behavior.

The chatter of saying this and that: and there must be more than this than that.

(Readings of documents aloud.)

Phasis on the positive reinforcement of Jaylynn’s IEP plains, with a clear present, direct message and provide acceptable options for behavior, implement immediate reactions with inappropriate behavior redirect and then take advantage of specific behavior management behaviors, directly comply then plan for inappropriate peer interactions, on The task of all authority characters to use, accommodations for state/region assessment: use pat in state and region ratings with the following accommodations: read the test, quoting only,) and test in 4 separate rooms or

smaller responses in the test booklet instead of on the answer sheet. Recommendations for reviewing the program of proposals:

The IEP team should consider continuing Jaylynn's current educational program. Phasis on positive reinforcement. Provide clear and direct messages. Provide acceptable options for behavior.

Provide immediate feedback with inappropriate behavior redirection, appropriate behavior management.

Behaviors and compliance with direct planning of inappropriate peer

interactions, during the tasks of all the power figures.

Accommodation for state/county assessment: Then in state and county level assessments with the following accommodations: reading test cited only,) testing in 4 separate rooms or smaller confessions in the test booklet instead of testing. The answer sheets.

Recommendations for reviewing the program of proposals:

The IEP team should consider continuing Jaylynn's current educational program.

Test done:

(— No adjustments/modifications needed

1 — Boost activity or content

2 — Adapting/modifying activity or content

3 — Use parallel activity or content

4 — Use an alternative activity or alternative result

Conclusions and recommendations made to the Recommendations Program Team:

Recommendation on the continuing need for special education:

Jaylynn continues to meet the criteria for a student with a specific learning disability, emotional: disorder, speech, and language disability, and needs specially designed education in...

Learning Support Program, Emotional Support Program, Speech, and Language support program.

The level of support should remain the same.

Review of the student program:

The students' progress in the general curriculum:

Reading: Limited

Language Arts: Limited

Mathematics: Limited

Science: Partly mastered a social study: partly mastered.

Educational activities that have succeeded:

Teaching skills and concepts at the educational level of the student.

Divide learning units into small controllable steps.

Save the student enough time to answer questions, complete assignments, or tests.

Reduce the number of homework or duties.

Determine the number and length of directions.

Read directions for students.

Provide additional opportunities for frequent practice.

Provide noble and fair oral comments.

Provide individual instruction or a small group.

Use collaborative learning in situations that do not require direct education.

Peer lessons. Always provide an orderly environment.

Provide preferential seats and gatherings in the classroom.

Use study guides or detailed charts.

Use homework papers or home notebooks, Read the student's test questions. Allow more time to perform tests. Determine the number of test items, use graph behavior or contract points/ clash.

Student retention rates (materials retained over time) are estimated as follows: less information is retained than

their average reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Environmental assessment results:

Jaylynn can care for his personal, social, emotional, and physical needs.

Results of the evaluation of vocational-technical education:

Jaylynn does not attend technology, so an avocational and technical education assessment has not been made.

Interests, preferences, preparations:

Transition planning does not occur until the student is at least 14 years old.

Results of functional behavioral evaluation:

Nevah's parents were deemed insufficient for IEP, whose school took over the rights of the child.

Jaylynn presents the following behaviors: speaking inappropriately, off-duty during education, teasing others, off the job while working independently, refusing to comply, and arguing. Jaylynn will say inappropriate things thinking that he is being 'cutesy.' Sometimes she will

eavesdrop on adult conversations and respond to conversations with inappropriate responses.

She does not, at times, pay attention.' So, the TSS keeps him on the job. She likes to have TSS do things for her like having her own 'server.' She will call children's names 'Four Eyes'.

Jaylynn will become stubborn and refuse to comply.

Precedents for problem behaviors (events that appear to lead to rapid behavior or triggers)

Include when giving an order/route unstructured setting

(cafeteria,) when submitting a challenging task, and when submitting a writing task. Common factors (slow triggers) include specific learning disabilities, a history of the family disorder, and history of atrazine/ neglect.

The following consequences, interventions, and outcomes problem behaviors include verbal praise, reprimand/ warning/ redirection, parent communication, use of behavior scheme/ code/ point system, planned to ignore, or lose privileges.

Perceived functions of behaviors gain the attention of peers and adults, need to belong, seek to control others

(feel more than anxious/inferior,) seek revenge 'get up,' and seek leadership.

Strengths:

Oral expression - precise motor skills are required. The following levels of support for baby inhibitors.

General knowledge base - word identification, decryption skills, reading understanding, language understanding, written language, general problem-solving skills, spelling, and math calculation.

Logic mathematics, improved attention span, increased mission continuity, improved ability to follow

directions, increased ability to work independently, and complete work within schedules. Get the job done more accurately/ carefully.

Improve organizational skills, prepare more for classroom tests increase class participation start appropriate peer interactions reduce peer conflicts follow classroom and school tiles, reduce inappropriate attention-seeking, increase compliance with other adults' directives: increase structural analysis in words and sentences, increase auditory discrimination, (vocal sequencing and identify similarities and differences.)

Period related to necessity:

This student's educational needs are stills

Placement:

Reading: Special 3

Language Arts: Special 3

Mathematics: Regular 1

Science: Regular 1

Social Studies: Regular 1

Health: Regular 1

Physical education: regular 0

As important as it is recommended to design specifically:

Support level - required, a summary of results/interpretation of evaluation results:

No individual assessments have been made for this comprehensive biennial assessment - report. This assessment of student progress is considered information from parents and teachers across multiple educational environments to reduce bias.

The current student's performance is to extend the civil school year: if necessary, and currently.

There is evidence that the student has maintained skills related to

IEP goals after breaks in education without significant decline.

Progress the student towards achieving the goals:

Vocabulary reading to 85% retention and 64 wpm level 2 grade use some progress - improving understanding both oral and written to 92% some progress.

Using the drill sandwich strategy is a way children can practice and learn new sight words, math facts, vocabulary, spelling words, or information by mixing what they know with what they need to learn.

This method is typically more motivating to the learner, since out of a group of ten flashcards, seven are already known. This permits the brain to focus on only learning three new pieces of information while reviewing known (often recently learned) material.

The repetition of the known material assists with its storage into long-term memory. The following are steps to building a drill sandwich.

Improve spelling to 90% on level 3 using 15 words some progress, improve in English using the correct initials and punctuation some progress-

Similarly, the improvement in parts of speech hosting some progress, improving in word analysis skills with current minimal progress. Thus, the improvement in auditory discrimination (similarities and differences between some words) minimum progress increases the ability to engage in positive peer interactions as evidenced by fewer behavioral incidents in school and some progress.

Educational evaluation results:

Student educational levels (actual grade level of curriculum materials that the student is taught as follows: At this time-

Reading: 1 Regressing

Language Arts: 1 No Regressing

Mathematics: 3 Grades Made

Science: 3 Regressing

Social studies: 3 Regressing

Student acquisition rates (physical learning while teaching) are estimated as...

The following:

Requires more repetition than his average reading, language, mathematics, Science with Social Studies.

~*~

My mother said this to me.

Yet you believe in your schizoaffective disorder if you want to, and all the junk above they said. Due to past teaching of believing something that is not true. Your superior and above all the rest.

You are a lefty. You often freak out over the littlest things. You have a good sense of humor. You are a little on the nosy side. You are a night owl. You are extremely sensitive or easily distracted. You walk a lot.

You realize how much knowledge you still lack. You are an expert in self-control. You often procrastinate. You are constantly munching on something.

You fall asleep from time to time during the day. You do not smoke; you are not very loud; you can find a connection between anything, you are a liberal, you ask yourself big questions. You are super loyal, you have surprising hobbies, you like taking risks.

You bite your nails. Smart people love cats. Smart people easily adapt. You sense when you are being lied to. You are self-sufficient. Sometimes you are messy. You do not lie to yourself. You can hold your emotions when it is necessary. You always make plans.

You like being lazy sometimes. You do not get stuck in the past. You

make mistakes. You do not prove anything to anyone. You know what finger ration means.

You prefer being alone. You learned to read at an incredibly youthful age. You are the oldest child in the family. You took music lessons at some point. You do not suffer from obesity. You do not really like physical activity. You have blue eyes. You are extremely sensitive to noise.

Your ring finger is longer than your index finger. You panic easily. You have a bit of a potty mouth. If you can admit that you are bad at some things. If you wear the same clothes every day. If you can feel what others are thinking. If

you can control yourself. If your eyes are blue at times.

(What?)

If you are a chocolate lover. When you are upset you know what is bothering you? If you talk to yourself. If you cannot stand any background noises. If your handwriting is messy.

Part:

Naddalin- I love the girls that are born-again virgins. Or like looking at your boy’s skin on his shaft next to the head and seeing how many small cut markings on it to show the girls he has been with, like a notch in a belt. Like the next time,

you see her she is not wearing panties to show you. So, I called her house, her cell, but nothing. Finally did a drive-by to make sure she was okay, and the lights were on, so it is clear she has been dodging me.' Her head. 'Left me with a bunch of angry clients, demanding a reading. Who would have thought she would turn out to be such a flake Jaylynn that is?'

Yes, who would have thought? Certainly not the person who was foolish enough to place her deepest darkest secrets right into her greedy, outstretched, hands...

'Still have not found anyone good enough to replace her though. And let me tell yah, it is impossible to give readings and take care of the store. That is why I stepped out just now.' She then shrugs. 'Surf was calling and I needed a break. Guess I left the door open again.'

Her eyes meet mine, sparkling and deep as they did when she was Elody in all the times of the past, and as of now, two she on the inside is always the same.

...And I cannot tell if he honestly believes she left the door open, or if he suspects me. But when I try to peer into her head to see for myself, I am stopped by the wall she is erected to safeguard

her thoughts from people like me. All I must go by is the brilliant purple aura I failed to see before-its color waving and shimmering, beckoning to me.

'So far all I have is a stack of applications from amateurs. But I am so desperate to get my weekends back, I am ready to toss their names in a bowl and pick one just to get it over with.' She shakes her head and flashes those dimples again.

...And even though part of me cannot believe what I am about to do, the other part, the more practical part, urges me on, recognizing the perfect

opportunity when it is standing before me.

'Maybe I can help.' I held my breath as I waited for her reply. But when my only response is a set of narrowed lids accompanied by the slightest curling of lips, I add, 'Seriously. You do not even have to pay me!'

Her squints even further, those amazing green eyes practically disappearing.

'What I meant was you don't have to pay me all that much,' I say, not wanting to come off as some weird desperate freak who gives it away for

free. 'I'll work for just over minimum wage-but only because I'm so good I'll be living off the tips.'

'You're psychic?' She folds her arms and tilts her head back, gazing at me with complete disbelief.

I straighten my posture and try not to fidget. Hoping to appear professional, mature, someone he can trust to help run her store. 'Yes.' I nod, unable to keep from wincing, unused to confiding my abilities to anyone, much less a stranger. 'I just sort of know things-information just sort of comes to me-it's hard to explain.'

She looks at me, wavering, then focusing just to my right as she says, 'So what exactly are you then?'

I shrug, fingers playing with the zipper on my hoodie, drawing it up and down, down, and up, having no idea what she means.

'Is your clairaudient, clairvoyant, clairsentient, circumstance, Clair scent, or Clair tangency? Which is it?' She then shrugs.

'All of the above.' I nod, having no purport what half those things mean, but figuring out if it has anything even

remotely to do with psychic abilities, then I can do it.

'Still, you're not mediumistic,' she says, as though it is the truth.

'I can see spirits.' shaking my shoulders. 'But only the ones that are still here, not the ones who've crossed;' I pause, acting to clear my windpipe, knowing it is better not to consider the bridge, School, or any of that. 'I can't see the ones who've crossed over.' I shrug, believing she does not try to push it since that is as far as I will go.

Her squints, gaze roaming from the top of my pale blond head and down to my Nike-clad feet.

A gaze that makes my complete dissertation shiver. Leading for a long-sleeved tee stashed supporting the bar and pulling it over her head where she peers at me and replies, 'Well, Regularly, if you want to act here, you're working to have to pass the hearing.'

Nevaeh, within the minds of Naddalin and with the minds, Karly Elody, Jaylynn, within her head at the time, locks the front door then leads me down a short hall and into a small room on the right.

I follow behind, hands flexed by my bottom, staring at the peace sign on the back of her tee and stressing myself that if she does anything creepy-like, I can take her down swiftly and make her regret the era she ever worked after me.

She motions approaching- a quilted foldable chair facing a small rectangle spread covered by shiny azure fabric, taking the seat just opposite me and propping her barefoot on her knee as she says, 'So, what is your specialization?'

I contemplate her, palms collapsing, focusing on taking slow deep breaths while trying not to wriggle.

'Tarot cards? Runes? I Ching? Psychometry? Which is it?'

I glimpse at the entrance, comprehending I could reach it in a fraction of a second, which strength induces a tumult, solely so what?

'You'll give me a reading, right?' levels her gaze at mine. Do you realize that is what I meant by auditioning? She laughs, displays a matching set of boils as she swings over her shoulder and laughs more.

I stare at the tablecloth, I follow the rough, rough silk with my fingers, and the heart rises to my cheek when I

remember Nadalin's last words, how she can always feel me, hoping to just say that, and she cannot feel me now.

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'I don't need anything,' I mutter, still unwilling to meet her sight. All I need is a quick touch of your hand, and I am fine.

Palminteri, she nods her head not as I expected, but well, leaning towards me, hands open, palms, ready to go.

I swallow hard, seeing the deeply etched lines, but that is not where the story lives-at least not for me. 'I don't read 'em,' I say, voice betraying my nervousness, as I work up the courage to touch her. 'It is more the-the energy-I just-tune into it. That is where all the info is.'

She pulls back, studying me so closely I cannot see her eyes. Knowing I need to just touch her, get it over with. And I need to do it now.

'Is it just the hand, or?' She flexes her fingers, the calluses lining her palms rising and falling again.

I clear my throat, wondering why I am so nervous, why I feel like I am betraying Naddalin when all I am trying to do is land a job that will make my aunt happy. 'No, it can be anywhere. Your ear, your nose, even your big toe-does not matter, it all reads the same. The hand's just more accessible, you know?'

'More accessible than the big toe?' She smiles, those sea-green eyes seeking mine.

I take a deep breath, thinking how coarse and rough her hands appear, especially compared to Naddalin's whose are almost softer than mine. And somehow, even just the thought of that makes the whole moment feel off. Now that our touch is forbidden, just being alone with another guy feels sordid, illicit, wrong.

I reach toward her, eyes shut tight, reminding myself it is just a job interview-that there is no reason I cannot land the thing quickly and painlessly.

Pressing my finger to the center of her palm and felt the soft, gentle give of her flesh. Allowing her stream of energy to flow through me-so peaceful, serene, it is like wading into the calmest of seas. So different from the rush of tingle and heart I have grown used to with Naddalin-at least until the shock of Naddalin's life story unfolds.

I yank my hand back as though I have been stung, fumbling for the amulet just under my top, noting the alarm on her face as I rush to explain. 'I'm sorry.' I shake my head, angry with myself for overreacting.

'Normally, I would not do that. Normally I am more discreet. I was just a little surprised-that is all. I did not expect to see anything quite so-' I stop, knowing my inane babbling is only making it worse. 'Normally, when I give readings, I hide my reactions much better than that.' I nod, forcing my gaze to meet her, knowing whatever I say will not hide the fact that I choked like the worst amateur.

'Seriously.' I smile, lips stretching in a way that cannot be convincing. 'I'm like the ultimate poker face.' Peering at her again and seeing her is not working.

'A poker face that is also full of empathy and compassion,' I stammer,

unable to stop the runaway train. 'I mean, really-I'm just-full of it-' I cringe, shaking my head as I gather my things so I can stop for the day. There is no way he will hire me now.

She slides to the edge of her seat, leaning so close I struggle to breathe. 'So, tell me, 'She says, gazing like a hand on my wrist, holding me in place. 'What exactly did you see?'

I swallow hard, closing my eyes for a moment and replaying the movie I just saw in my head. The images are so clear, dancing before me, as I say, 'You're different.' I peer at her, her body

unmoving, gaze steady, allowing no clues as to whether I am on track.

'But then, you have always been different. Ever since you were little you have seen them.' I swallow hard and avert my gaze, the image of her in her crib, smiling and waving at the grandmother who passed years before her birth now etched on my brain. 'And when-' I pause, not wanting to say it, but knowing that if I want the job, then I had better get to it.

'But when your father shot herself back when you were ten-you thought you were to blame. Convinced your insistence on seeing your mother, who passed just one year before,

somehow sent her over the edge. It was years before you accepted the truth that your father was just lonely, depressed, and anxious to be with your mother again. Even so, sometimes you still doubt it.'

I gaze at her, noting how she has not so much as flinched, though something in those deep green eye's hints at the truth.

Part:

I remember that I swallow hard, seeing deeply engraved lines, but this is not where the story lives, at least not for me. 'I don't read 'em,' I say, the sound of my nervous betrayal, and I work up the

courage to touch it. 'It is more energy, I just tune in. This is where all the information is.'

She draws back, considering me so intimately I cannot see her sights. Knowing I need to just touch her, get it over with. Moreover, I need to do it now.

'Is it just the hand, or?' She flexes her fingers, the calluses lining her palms rising and falling again.

I clear my throat, wondering why I am so nervous.

Why?

I feel like I am betraying Naddalin when all I am trying to do is

land a job that will make my relatives smile. 'No, it can be anywhere. Your ear, your nose, even your big toe-does not matter, it all indicates the equivalent. The hand's just more accessible, you understand?'

'More convenient than the big toe?' She smirks, those sea-green eyes endeavoring mine.

I take a deep breath, thinking how coarse and rough her hands appear, especially compared to Naddalin's whose are almost softer than mine. And somehow, even just the thought of that makes the whole moment feel off.

Quickly that our touch is prohibited, just being alone with a different person feels sordid, unauthorized, and beyond.

I reach toward her, eyes shut tight, reminding myself it is just a job interview-that there is no reason- I cannot land the thing quickly and painlessly. Pressing my finger to the center of her palm and felt the soft, gentle give of her flesh.

Allowing her stream of energy to flow through me- so-o peaceful, serene, it is like wading into the calmest of seas.

So-o different from the rush of tingle and heart I have grown used to with Naddalin- at least until the shock of Naddalin's life story unfolds.

-And-

I jerk my hand back as though I have been prickled, mishandling the ornament just supporting my top, regarding the dread on her profile as I speed to resolve. 'I'm melancholy.' I bounce my head, cross with personally for exaggerating. 'Frequently- I would not do such.

Normally- I am more reserved. I was just scarcely astounded, that is all. I

did not demand to see anything quite true.' I stop, recognizing my pointless babbling is only making it more serious.

'Ordinarily, meanwhile I take examinations, I protect my results much more than that.' I consent, driving my gaze to meet her, comprehending whatever I say will not hide the experience that I smothered like the worst kind of beginner.

'Solemnly.' I beam, lips stretching in a way that cannot be acceptable. 'I'm like the terminal fire-stirrer face.' Inspecting her again and seeing her is not positively operating.

'An iron face that is also full of understanding furthermore sympathy,' I hesitate, unable to obstruct the runaway train. 'I mean, really- I'm just- full of this.' I flinch, swinging my head as I reduce my stuff so I can stop for the day. There is no way he will let me know.

She slides to the edge of her seat, leaning so close I strive to breathe. 'Consequently, recognize me,' she says, gazing like a hand on my wrist, holding me in position. 'What specifically did you recognize?'

I gulp inebriating, connecting my sights for a moment, and replaying the film I just saw in my head.

The illustrations are so bright, rocking before me, as I say, 'You're different.' I scrutinize her, her body unmoving, eye steady, yielding no hints as to whether I am on track.

'Without then, you have always been collected. Eternally because you were short you have viewed them.' I gulp hard and thwart my gaze, the photograph of her in her cradle, laughing and swinging at the grandma who passed years before her birth now etched on my intellect.

'Moreover when,' I hesitate, not wanting to say it, but knowing that if I

want the position, then I had better get to this.

'Exactly when your daddy shot himself back when you were ten- or even younger I do not remember- you thought you were to blame.

Overcome your perseverance in seeing your mother, which passed just one year before, somehow sent her over the edge.

It was years before you accepted the truth that your father was just lonely, depressed, and anxious to be with your mother again. Even so, sometimes you still doubt it.'

I gaze at her, noting how she has not so much as flinched, though something in those deep green eye's hints at the truth.

She tried to visit a few times. Wanting to apologize for what she did, but even though you sensed her, you blocked it.

Sick of being teased by your classmates and scolded by the nuns-not to mention your foster dad. 'I shake my head, not wanting to continue, but knowing I must.'

'You just wanted to be normal.' Shake my shoulder. 'Treated like

everyone else.' I trace my fingers over the tablecloth, throat beginning to tighten, knowing exactly how it feels too long to fit in, all the while knowing you never truly can.

'Simply after you ran away and met Lina, who is not your real grandmother-your real grandparents are dead.'

I look at her again, wondering if she is surprised that I knew that, but she gives nothing away. 'Anyway, she took you in, fed you, clothed you, she.'

'She saved my life.' She sighs, leaning back in her seat, long tanned

fingers stroking at her eyes. 'In many ways. I was so lost and she.'

'Accepted you for who you really are.' I nod, seeing the whole story before me as though I am right there.

'Including who is that?' She asks hands splayed on her knees, gazing at me. 'Who am I really?'

I look at her, not even pausing when I say, 'A guy so smart you finished high school in tenth grade. A guy with such amazing mediumistic abilities has helped hundreds of people and asked extraordinarily little in exchange.

Moreover yet, despite all of that, you are also a guy who's so-o.'

I look at her, lips lifting at the corners. 'Well, I was going to say lazy- but since I really do want the job, I'll say laid-back instead.'

I laugh, relieved when she laughs along with me. 'Plus given the choice you would never work another day. You would spend the rest of your eternity just searching for that one perfect wave.'

'Is that a metaphor?' she asks, with a crooked smile on her face.

'Not in your case.' Bouncing my shoulder. 'In your case, it's a fact.'

She nods, leaning back in her chair, gazing at me in a way that makes my stomach dance. Dropping forward again, feet flat on the floor when she says, 'Guilty.'

Part:

(Remembering back)

Eyes wistful, searching mine. 'And now, since there are no secrets left, since you have peered right into the core of my soul- I must ask, any insights into my future-a certain blond-haired person perhaps?'

I shift in my seat, preparing to speak when she cuts me right off.

'Plus, I am talking about the immediate future, as on Friday night. Will Emmah ever agree to go out with me?'

'Emmah?' My voice cracks as my eyes practically pop out of my head. So much for the poker face, I was bragging about.

Watching as she closes her eyes and shakes her head, those long, golden curls contrasting so nicely with her gorgeous tan skin. 'Anastasia Pappas, aka Emmah,' she says, unaware of my sigh of relief, thrilled to know it is some other horrible Emmah and not the one I know.

Turning in to the energy surrounding her name and knowing right away that it is never going to happen, at least not in the way that she thinks. 'You really want to know?'

I ask, knowing I could save her a lot of wasted effort by telling her now, but doubting her wants to hear the truth as much as she claims. 'I mean, wouldn't you rather just wait and see how it plays?' I look at her, hoping he will agree.

'Is that what you are going to say to your clients?' She asks, back to business again.

I shake my head, looking right at her. 'Hey, if they're fool enough to ask, then I'm fool enough to tell.' Smile. 'So, the question is, how big of a fool are you?'

She pauses, hesitates for so long that I worry that I took it too far. But then her smile, right hand extended as she rose from her seat. 'Fool enough to hire you. Now I know why you would not shake hands the first time around.' She nods, squeezing my hand for a few seconds too long. 'That's one of the most amazing readings I've ever had.'

'One of them?' I lift my brow in the mock offense as I reach for my bag and walk alongside her.

She laughs, heading for the door and glancing at me when she says. 'Why don't you stop by tomorrow morning, say around ten?'

I pause, knowing there is no way I can do that.

'What or what? You prefer to sleep in? Join the club.' She shrugs. 'But believe me, if I can do it, you can too.'

'It's not that.' I pause, wondering why I am so reluctant to tell her. I mean, now that I have the job, what do I care about what she thinks?

She looks at me, waiting, gaze adding up the seconds.

'It's just-I have class.' I shrug, thinking how class sounds so much older than a school like I am in college or something.

She squinted, looking at me over again. 'Where is it?'

'Um, over at Bay View,' I mumble, trying not to wince when I say it aloud.

'High school?' Her eyes narrow further, newly informed.

'Wow, you really are psychic.' I laugh, knowing I sound nervous, stupid, coming clean when I add, 'I'm finishing my junior year.'

She looks at me for a moment-too long a moment-then she turns and opens the door. 'You seem older,' she says, the words so abstract I am not sure if they were meant for me or her. 'Stop by when you can. I will show you how to work the register and a few other things around here.'

'You want me to sell stuff? I thought I was just giving readings?' Surprised to hear my job description expanding so quickly.

'When you are not reading, you will be working on the floor. Is that a problem?'

I shake my head as she holds the door open. 'Just-just one thing.' I bite down on my lip, unsure how to go ahead. 'Well, two things. First-do you mind if I go by a different name-you know, for the readings and stuff? I live with my aunt, and while she is cool and all, she does not exactly know about my abilities, so.'

'Be whoever you want.' She shrugs. 'No worries. But since I need to start booking appointments, who do you want to be?'

I pause, not having thought it through until now. I am wondering if I should choose Rachel after my best friend in Oregon, or something even more

common like Anne or Jenny or something like that.

Disregarding knowing how mortals always expect psychics to be about as far from normal as it grows, I contemplate toward the shore and choose the third thing I see, circumventing the Tree and Basketball Court as I speak, 'Karly.' Immediately I liked the sound of it. 'You know, like the town on Catalina Island?'

She nods, following me outside as she asks, 'And the second thing?'

I turn, taking a deep breath and hoping she will listen when I say, 'You can do better than Emmah.'

Then she looks at me, gaze moving over my face, clearly resigned to the truth if not exactly thrilled to hear it from me.

And then- I remember my life and its end also, in times of the payback of paybacks, Haven’s whole family of the mother and the 3 girls that looked identical like she also was given a public guillotine end to their lives it is forever in my mind and haunts my dreams even in the afterlife I remember these moments.

'You have a dangerous memoir of falling for all the wrong girls.' Jar my head like the one you are thinking of at this moment. 'You do know that true?'

I wait for an acknowledgment, some perception of what I simply answered, but she just shrugs moreover beckons me away. Still patrolling as I try for my wheels within my house and carriage, owning no opinion I can understand her when she reminisces: Do not I know this.

Nevaeh- I recall the minute I slurped into the drive Jaylynn called my cell, telling me to just go ahead and order

a pizza for dinner since she must work late.

Furthermore, even though I am tempted to tell her regarding my new job, I do not.

I mean, I require to familiarize her, if for no other reason than to spare me the one she is lined up including, but there is no way I can admit to getting the job. Like she will think it is weird. Indeed, if I omit all the stuff about receiving paid to give readings (and believe me, I will never dream of considering that) she will still consult a job at a transcendental bookstore is strange. Even silly. Who do you know?

Jaylynn is far too sensible and rational to ever get following such a matter. Preferring to live in a world that is sturdy and solid... which makes absolute thought, versus the real one that... is anything but and while I hate always should prevail to her. I do not see how I have much of a choice... There is just not the way she can ever learn the trustworthiness about me, let alone that I will be giving readings under the code name of Avalynn.

I just told her I got a job somewhere local, someplace normal, like a conventional bookstore, or a Starbucks. And then of course I will have to obtain a

way to back the novel up in case she decides to follow up on all that.

I park in the carport and hear up the stairs, flinging my bag onto my bed without yet watching, next heading for my closet as I flip off my top.

Presently about to unzip my jeans when Naddalin says, 'Do not mind me, I'm just sitting here enjoying the view.' I cover my chest with my arms, heart beating triple time as Naddalin lets out a low, sweet white and smiles at me.

'I did not even see you. I did not even sense you for that matter,' I say, reaching for my tee again.

'Suppose you were too preoccupied.' She smiles, hitting the space right beside her, face wrinkling with laughter when I drag on my shirt before joining her.

'What're you doing here?' I ask, not interested in the answer, only glad to be near her repeatedly.

'I figured since Jaylynn running late-'

'How'd you-' Just then I swing my head and laugh. Of course, she understands. She can read everyone's subconscious, including mine, but only when I want her to. And even though I

usually leave my shield down, making my thoughts accessible for her to view, right now I just cannot. I feel like I need to explain… tell my side of the story before he can peek in my head and draw her conclusions.

'Moreover, considering you did not come by after school-' She leans toward me, eyes endeavoring mine.

'I am required to give you some time with the twins.' I draw a pillow onto my belly plus finger the seam. 'You understand, so you could get accepted to being common and-stuff-' I shrug, meeting her gaze, knowing she is not buying it, not for an instant.

'Oh, we are used to each other.' Tittering. 'I assure you of that.' She shakes her head.

'It has been quite a day, remarkably busy and remarkably interesting, for lack of a better word. However, we yearned for you.'

She beams, eyes covering over my hair, my expression, my lips, like the sweetest lingering kiss. 'It would've been extremely much more salutary if you'd been there.'

I thwart my gaze, challenging any of that is the slightest bit true. Grumbling under my inspiration when I speak, 'I bet.'

She caresses my chin, making me face her, face concealed with interest when she summons, 'Hey, what is that about?'

I urge my lips synchronically and glance away, scrunching my pillow so tight it threatens to burst, wishing I had not spoken anything because promptly I must tell.

'I'm simply' I sway my head. 'I'm just not so sure the twins would accept.' Jaring my shoulder. 'They are moderately substantial in blaming me for everything.

-And-

Furthermore, it is not like they do not have a point. I mean.'

Simply before I can finish, I realize something-Naddalin is touching me.

Like touching me, feeling me.

For the royal.

No mitt, no telepathic embrace, simply good old-fashioned skin-on-skin contact-or at least, nearly contact.

How did you, I look at her, her eyes shining with laughter when she intercepts me peering at her bare, gloveless hand.

'You like?'

She beams, seizing my arm and lifting it high, both of us listening as the thin web of energy, the only thing separating my skin from her, quivers connecting us. 'I have been working on it all day. Nothing is going to keep me from you, Always, never- ever, nothing at all.' She nods, her gaze joining mine.

I glance at her, mind flying with hopes, of all that could mean. Experiencing the almost feel of her skin, divided only by the most delicate shroud of straight, vibrating energy, inconspicuous to everyone but us. Furthermore, while it does temper the

usual haste of tingle and spirit with soul, and while it could nevermore compare to the real thing, I miss her so-o much- just being with her- I will take what I can get.

I lean into her, watching the veil expand until its stretchers from our heads to our toes. Allowing us to live together in the way that we used to or at least in the way that we used to.

'Much better.' I smile, hands roaming her face, her arms, her chest. 'Not to mention how far less embarrassing it is than the black leather glove.'

'Embarrassing?' She pulls away and looks at me, mock outrage displayed on her face.

'Come on.' Giggling.

'Yet you must admit it was a total fashion faux pas. I thought she was going to have a breakdown every time she saw it,' I whisper, inhaling her incredible, warm, musky scent as I bury my face in her neck. 'So, how would you do it?'

My lips grazed her skin, longing to taste every inch. 'How'd you harness the magic of School and bring it back here?'

'It's got nothing to do with school,' she whispers, lips at the curve of my ear.

'It is just the magic of energy. Besides, you should know by now that everything you can do there can be done here as well.'

Then at that moment, I stared at her, memorizing Ava and all the elaborate gold jewelry and designer clothes she used to manifest there, and how upset she always was when they did not survive the return trip home.

Then before I can even mention it, she responds, 'While it has true that

the things manifested there cannot be transferred here, if you realize how the alchemy works, if you truly get how everything is just made up of energy, then there is no motive you cannot manifest the same things here. Like your pick-up truck, for instance.'

'I'd hardly call it my pick-up truck,' I say, cheeks blushing even though it was not so- so long ago when she had a thing for strange cars too.

'The instant I was achieved with it I sent it right back. I mean, it is not like I grasped it.'

She smiles, concealing her hand in my hair and smoothing the ends between the tips of her fingers. 'In between manifesting things for the twins, I perfected this.'

'What kind of things?' I inquire, commanding so-so I can see her, at once delighted by the appearance of her lips, memorizing how warm and silky they once felt on mine, querying if the new energy protection will allow us to experience that repeatedly.

'It all commenced with the flat-screen TV.' She sighs. 'Or should I say flat screens since they ended up necessitating

one for each of their rooms, plus another two for the den that they will share.

-And-

‘Not long after I got them all fastened up and working, they sat down to watch, and not five moments in they were inundated with representations of things they couldn't live without.'

I- Jaylynn peeped, astounded to hear that since the twins never seemed to care all that much about material things back in school, but that's because palpable things tend to lose most of their importance once you can manifest whatever you want.

I- Jaylynn suggests dropping their magic has made them just like anyone else-longing for everything just out of their grasp.

'Believe me, they're an advertiser's dream.' She smirks, shaking her head. 'Falling right into that coveted youth exchange of thirteen to thirty.'

'I remember...'

'Saving for the case that you did not truly obtain any of those things, did you?

You just closed your eyes and made them appear. The same as going to

the store and carrying it on your credit card.

Do you even have a credit card?' Never having seen her even carry a wallet, much less a pile of plastic.

'No need.' She laughs, finger skimming the bridge of my nose before her lips meet the tip. 'But even though I did not go out and buy all those things as you so generously pointed out...' Her smile. 'That does not make those commercials any less effective, which was really my point.'

I pull away, knowing she is expecting me to laugh, or at least say

something lighthearted in reply, but I cannot. And even though I hate to disappoint her, I still shake my head and say, 'Either way, you need to be careful.' I shift my body so my gaze can better meet her.

'You shouldn't spoil them so much or make them so comfortable they're reluctant to leave.' She squints at me, clearly not following my meaning, so I rush ahead to explain. 'What I mean is, you need to remember that living with you is a temporary solution. Our main goal is to look after them until we can restore their magic and get them back to School, which is where they belong.'

She rolls onto her back and stares at the ceiling. Turning her face toward mine as she says, 'About that.'

I held my breath and looked at her, my stomach dipping ever so slightly.

'I've been thinking-' Her squints. 'Who's to say School is where they belong?'

I balk, an argument pressing forth from my lips until she raises her finger and stops it right there.

'Ever, the question as to whether they return, well, don't you think that is something they should decide? I am not

sure we are the ones who should be making those choices.'

'But we're not choosing,' I say, voice shrill, unsteady. 'That's what they want! Or at least that is what they said the night I found them. They were furious with me, blaming me for the loss of their magic, for stranding them here-or at least Rayne was Javion-well, Javion was just Javion.'

Shake my shoulder. 'But still. Are you saying that has changed?'

She closes her eyes for a moment, before levelling her gaze back at mine. 'I'm not sure they even know what

they want at this point,' she says. 'They're a little overwhelmed, excited by the possibilities of being here, and yet too terrified to even step outside. I just think we should give them some time and space and keep our minds open to the possibility of them staying a little bit longer than planned. Or at least until they are fully adjusted, and better able to decide for themselves. Besides, I owe them, it is the least I can do. Do not forget they helped me find you.'

So-o, I swallow hard and avert my gaze, torn between wanting what is best for the twins while worried about the impact it will have on Naddalin and me. I

mean, they have been here less than a day and I am already mourning my access to her, which is a selfish way to view two people in need. Still, I do not think you have to be psychic to know that with the two of them around, requiring all kinds of assistance, times like the-when it is just Naddalin and me will be severely limited.

'Is that the first time you met? In School?' I ask, seeming to remember Rayne saying something about Naddalin helping them, not the other way around.

Naddalin shakes her head, eyes on mine when he says, 'No, that was just the first time I had seen them in a long

time. We go way back-all the way back to Salem.'

I look at her, jaw dropped, wondering if she was there during the trials, though she is quick to dispel that.

'It was just before the trouble started, and I was only passing through. They had gotten into some mischief and could not find their way home-so I gave them a ride in my carriage and their aunt was never the wiser.'

Part:

Laugh now.

-And-

I am about to make some crappy little comment, something about her spoiling and enabling them from the very start, when he says, 'They've suffered an extraordinarily hard life-losing everything they have ever known and loved at an incredibly young age-surely you can relate to that? I know I can.'

I sigh, feeling small, selfish, and embarrassed that I even needed to be reminded of that. Determined to stick to the practical when I say, 'But who is going to raise them?' Hoping it will seem like my concerns are far less about me and more about them. I mean, with all their unmitigated weirdness, not to

mention their bizarre history, where would they go? Who could look after them?

'We're going to look after them.' Naddalin rolls onto her side and makes me face her again. 'You and I. Together. We are the only ones who can.'

I sigh, wanting to turn away, but drawn to the warmth of her all-encompassing gaze. 'I'm just not sure we're fit to be parents.' I shrug, hand moving over her shoulder, getting lost in her tangle of hair. 'Or role models, or guardians, or whatever. We are too young!' I add, thinking it is a good and

valid point, and expecting about any reaction but the laughter I get.

'Too young?' She shakes her head. 'Speak for yourself! I have been around for a while, you know. Long enough to qualify as a suitable guardian for the twins. Besides.' Her smile. 'How hard can it be?'

I close my eyes and shake my head, remembering my feeble attempts to guide Riley both in human and ghost form, and how I failed miserably. And to be honest, I am just not sure I am up for it again. 'You have no idea what you're getting into,' I tell her. 'You cannot even begin to imagine what it is like to guide

two headstrong, thirteen-year-old girls. It is like herding cats-completely impossible.'

'Ever,' she says, voice low, coaxing, determined to ease my concerns and chase all the dark clouds away. 'I know what is really bothering you, believe me, I do. But it is just five more years until they turn eighteen and hear off on their own, and then we will have the freedom to do whatever we want. What's five years when we have all of eternity?'

But I shake my head again, refusing to be swayed. 'If they heard off on their own,' I say. 'If. Believe me, there

are plenty of kids who stick around the house long after that.'

'Yes, but the difference is, you and I won't let them.' Her smiles, eyes practically begging me to lighten up and smile too. We will teach them all the magic they will need to gain their independence and get by on their own. Then we will send them off and wish them well and go somewhere on our own.'

And the way she smiles, the way she gazes into my eyes and smooths my hair off my face makes it impossible to stay mad, impossible to waste any more time on a topic like this when my body's so close to her.

'Five years is nothing, when you've already lived for six hundred,' she says, lips at my Cherek, my neck, my ear.

I snuggle closer, knowing he is right, even though my perspective's a little different from hers. Having never spent more than two decades in any one incarnation makes five years spent babysitting the twins seem like an eternity.

She pulls me to her, arms locked tightly around me, comforting me in a way I wish could last forever. 'Are we good?' her whimpers. 'Are we finished with this?'

I nod, pressing my body hard against her, having no need for words. The only thing I want now, the only thing that will make me feel better is the reassuring feel of her lips.

I shift my body, so it is covering her, conforming to the bend of her chest, the valley of her torso, the bulk near her hips. Hearts beating in perfect cadence, vaguely aware of the slim veil of energy pulsating between us as I lower my mouth to her-pressing and pushing and kneading together-weeks of longing rising to the surface-until all I want to do is infuse my body with her.

Her moans, a low primal sound coming from deep within, hands clutched at my waist, bringing me closer 'til there is nothing between us but two sets of clothes that need to be shredded.

I fumble at her fly as she pulls at my tee, breath meeting in short, ragged gasps as our fingers hurry as fast as they can, unable to complete their tasks quickly enough to satisfy our needs.

-And-

Just as I unbuttoned her jeans and started to slide them down, I realized we had gotten so close, the energy veil was pushed out.

'Naddalin!' I gasp, watching as she leaps from the bed, breathing so heavy and fast, her words are clipped at the end.

'Forever- I'm-' She shakes her head. 'I'm sorry-I thought it was safe-I didn't realize-'

I reach for my tee and cover myself, cheeks flushed, insides aflame, knowing he is right, we cannot take the risk-cannot afford to get caught up like that.

'I'm sorry too-I think-think maybe pushed it away and-' I bow my head, allowing my hair to fall into my face,

feeling small and examined, sure I am to blame.

The mattress dips as she returns to my side, the veil fully restored as she lifts my chin and makes me face her again. 'It's not your fault-II lost focus-I was so caught up in you I couldn't maintain it.'

'It is okay. Really,' I say.

'No, it is not. I am older than you-I should have more control-'She shakes her head and stares at the wall, jaw clenched, gaze far away, eyes suddenly narrowing as she turns back to me and

says, 'Forever-how do we know if this is even real?'

I squinted, having no idea what she meant.

'What kind of proof do we have? How do we know Naddalin's not just playing us, having a bit of fun at our expense?'

I take a deep breath and shrug, realizing I have no proof at all. My eyes meet her as I replay the scene from that day, all the way to the end where I add my blood to the mix and make Naddalin drink, realizing the only proof I have is Naddalin's extremely unreliable word.

'Who's to say this is even legit?' Her eyes widen as an idea begins to form. 'Naddalin's a liar-we've no reason to trust her.'

'Yes, but-it is not like we can test it. I mean, what if it is not a big game, what if it is legit? We cannot take the risk-can we?'

Naddalin smiles, rising from the bed and heading for my desk where she closes her eyes and manifests a tall white candle in an elaborate gold holder, a sharp silver dagger, its blade pointy and smooth, its handle encrusted with crystals and gems, and a gold-framed mirror her sets down beside them, motioning for me

to join her as she says, 'Normally I would say ladies first-but in the case-'

She takes her hand over the glass and increases the knife, putting the edge to her palm and pursuing the curve of her salvation, regarding her blood issue onto the glass, pooling, hardening, before tying her sights and inserting the rushlight aflame. The bruise is already healed by the time she passes the blade through the burning, cleansing, excusing, and before handing it to me and forcing me to do the same.

She caresses her palm over the glass and advances as I tend toward her, sniffing deeply as I quickly slice through

my flesh. At first wincing at the sharp stab of pain then patrolling interested, as the ancestry pours from my palm and onto the mirror where I can see all the past selves where it slowly crawls toward her.

We stand collectively, relics still, wind rested, waiting while two ruby red smudges meet, admix, coalesce- the comprehensive epitome of our hereditary makeup joining as one-the very thing Naddalin warned us against.

Waiting for something to happen, some catastrophic punishment for what we've both done-but getting nothing- no reaction at all.

'Well, I'll be damned-' Naddalin says, eyes meeting mine. 'It is fine! Perfectly.'

Her words are cut short by the sudden spark and sizzle as our blood begins to boil, conducting so much heart a huge plume of smoke bursts from the mirror and fills up the air-crackling and spitting until the blood evaporates completely.

Leaving behind only the sheerest layer of dust on a burnt-out mirror. Specifically, what will happen to Naddalin if our DNA should meet. We gape, voiceless, hesitant about what to speak.

Although words stand no great faith, the application is clear.

Naddalin's not performing. Her alarm was real. Naddalin and I can never be coincidental.

Unless like- I pay her ransom...

'Well...' Naddalin nods, struggling to appear calm though her face is stricken. 'Guess Naddalin's not the liar I accused her of- at least not in this case.'

'Which also means she has the antidote- and all I have to do now is-'

Though I cannot even finish before Naddalin's cutting me off. 'Always, please, do not even go there. Just do me a

favor and stay away from Naddalin. She is dangerous, and unstable, and I do not want you anywhere near her, okay? Just-' She shakes her head and runs her hand through her hair, not wanting me to see how distraught she is and heading for the door as she says, 'Just give me some time to figure things out. I will think of a way.'

She looks at me, so shaken by the events she is determined to keep her distance. Manifesting a single red tulip into my newly herald palm in place of a kiss, before heading down the stairs and out my front door.

The next day, when I got home from school, Haven's on my front steps,

eyes smeared with mascara, royal blue bangs hanging limp in her face, with a blanketed bundle clutched tight in her arms.

'I know I should've called.' She scrambles to her feet; her face is so red and swollen as she sniffs back the tears. 'I guess I didn't really know what to do, so I came here.' She rearranges the blanket, showing me a solid black cat with amazing green eyes that appears very weak.

'Is she yours?' I glance between them, noticing how both of their auras are ragged and frayed.

'Woman.' Haven nods, fussing with the blanket and raising it back to her chest.

'I didn't know you had a cat.' I squinted, wanting to help but unsure what to do. My dad was allergic, so we always had dogs. 'Is this why you were not at school today?'

She nods, following me into the kitchen where I grab a bottle of water and pour it into a bowl.

'How long have you had her?' I ask, watching as she places the cat in her lap and brings the bowl to her face. But

the cat's not the least bit interested and quickly turns away.

'Few months.' She shrugs, giving up on the water and smoothing the top of her head. 'Nobody knows. Well, outside of Josh, Austin, and the house cleaner who is sworn to secrecy, but nobody else. My mom would flip. God forbid a real living thing mess up her designer decorating scheme.' She shakes her heralds. 'Sher lives in my room, mostly under the bed. But I leave the window cracked so she can get out and wander around now and then. I mean, I know they are supposed to live longer if you keep them inside, but what kind of life is that?' Sher looks at

me, her normally bright sunshiny aura turned gray with worry.

'What's her name?' I peer at the cat, keeping my voice to a whimper, trying to hide my concern. From what I can see, she is not longing for the world.

'Chrissa Marcicela.' The corners of her lips lift ever so slightly as she glances between us. 'I named her that because she is lucky-or at least it seemed that way at the time. I found her just outside my window the first time Josh and I kissed. It seemed so Mid Atlantic.' She then shrugs. 'Like a good sign. But now-' She shakes her head and looks away.

'Maybe I can help,' I say, an idea beginning to form. One I am not sure will work, but still, from what I can see I have nothing to lose.

'Sher's not exactly a kitten. She is an old lady now. The vet told me to keep her comfortable for as long as I can.

-And-

I totally would have kept her home since she likes it under my bed, but my mom's decision to redo all the bedrooms even though my dad's threatening to sell, and now the decorator is there, along with a realtor, and

everyone's fighting, and the house is a mess.

-And-

Then since Josh is auditioning for the new band, and since Miles is getting ready for her performance tonight, I thought I had come here.'

She is looking at me from the side. 'Not that you were the last choice or anything.' She cringes, realizing what she just said. 'It is just that you are always so small with Naddalin and I did not want to bother you.

But if you are small, I do not have to stay. I mean, if he is coming over or something, I can just-'

'Trust me.' I lean against the counter and shake my head. 'Naddalin's-' I stare at the wall, wondering just how to phrase it. 'Naddalin's small these days. So, I doubt he will be quickly visiting anytime soon.'

I glance between here and Chrissa, reading her aura and knowing she is even more distraught than she seems. And even though I know it is not right, ethical, or whatever, even though I know it is the circle of life and you are not supposed to interfere, I cannot stand to

see my friend suffer like this, not when I have a half bottle of elixir sitting inside my bag.

'I'm just sad.' Sher sighs, scratching just under Chrissa's chin. 'I mean, obviously she has lived a good long life and all, but still. Why does it have to be so sad when it ends?'

I shrug, barely listening, mind buzzing with the promise of a new idea.

'It is so weird how like one minute everything is fine-or even not so fine-but still, you are at least here. And then the next gone. Like Evangeline. Never to be seen or heard from again.'

I drum my fingers against the granite counter, knowing that is not exactly true, but unwilling to refute it.

'I guess I just do not get the point. It is like, why should you bother getting attached to anything if, A: It is never going to last, and B: It hurts like hell when it is over?' She shakes her head. 'Because if everything's finite, if everything has a definite beginning, middle, and end, then why even get started in the first place? What is the point where everything just leads to The End?'

She blows her bangs out of her eyes and looks at me. 'And I don't mean

death like-' She nods toward her cat. 'Although that's where we all end up-no matter how hard we fight.'

I glance between here and Chrissa, nodding as though I am right there. Like I am just like everyone else. Waiting for my turn in a long morbid line.

'I mean death in a more metaphorical way. In a nothing lasts forever way, you know. Because it is true, nothing is built to last. Nothing. No. Things.'

'But Haven-' I start, stopping the second she shoots me a look meant to silence.

'Listen, before you try to sell me all that bright side nonsense you're just dying to spout, name one thing that doesn't end.' She narrows her gaze in a way that sets me on edge, making me wonder if she knows about me if she is trying to bait me somehow. But when I take a deep breath and look at her again, it is clear she is battling her own set of demons, not me.

'Can't do it, right?' She shakes her herald. 'Unless you were going to say God, or universal love, or whatever, but that is not what I am talking about, anyway. I mean, Chrissa is dying, my parents are on the verge of divorcing,

and, let us face it, Josh and I are going to end eventually too. And if it is purely an inevitable fact, then-' She shakes her head and wipes her nose. 'Well-I may as well take control of the situation and be the one who decides when. Hurt her, before she can hurt me.

Because two things are for sure, A: It is going to end, and B: Someone's bound to get hurt. And why should that someone be me?' Sher looks away, nose runny, lips twisted. 'Mark my words, from that point on, I am a Skaufyceol Girl. Everything runs right off me, nothing can stick.'

I look at her, sensing that is not the whole story, but willing to take her at her word. 'You know what?

‘You're right. You are right,' I say, seeing her look up in surprise. 'Everything is finite.' Everything but Naddalin, Naddalin, and me!

'And you are also right that you and Josh will end at some point, and not just because everything ends like you said, but because that is just the way it goes. Most high school relationships do not make it past graduation.'

'Is that how you see you and Naddalin?' She picks at Chrissa's blanket

while looking at me. 'That you guys will not make it past graduate night?'

I press my lips together and avert my gaze, knowing I am the world's worst liar when I say, 'I try not to think about it too much. But what I meant was, just because something ends does not mean it is a sad thing or that someone is bound to get hurt, or that it should have never happened in the first place, or whatever. Because if each step brings us to the next, then how will we ever get anywhere, how can we ever grow if we avoid everything that might hurt us?'

She looks at me, nodding only slightly, as though she sees my point but will not fully concede.

'So-o we have no choice but to continue, to just get out there and hope for the best. And who knows, we might even learn a thing or two along the way.' I look at her, knowing I have not completely sold it, so I add, 'I guess what I am trying to say is, you cannot run away just because something will not last. You must hang in there, let it play out. It is the only way you will ever advance.' I shrug, wishing I could be a little more eloquent, but there it is.

'Think about it, if you didn't rescue your cat, if you didn't say yes when Josh asked you out-well, there's a lot of wonderful moments you would've missed.'

She looks at me, still wanting to argue, but not saying a word.

'Josh is a sweet guy, and he is crazy about you. I do not think you should throw her overboard so soon. Besides,' I say, knowing she hears me but is not truly listening, 'you shouldn't make those kinds of decisions when you're feeling so stressed.'

'How about moving, then? Is that a good enough reason?'

'Josh is moving?' I squint. I had not seen that coming.

Sher shakes her head, scratching Chrissa on the spot between her ears when she says, 'Not Josh, and Me.

My dad keeps talking about selling the house, but damn if he discusses it with Austin or me.'

I look at her, tempted to peer inside her head and see for myself, but sticking to my earlier vow to allow my friends their privacy.

'All I know for sure is that the phrase resale value comes up all the time.' She shakes her head, looking at me

when she says, 'But you know what this really means, if any of this is true? It means I will not be going to Bay View next year. I will not graduate from my class. I will not be going to any Orange County high school for that matter.'

'I won't let this happen,' I say, gaze locked at her. 'There's no way you are leaving. You must graduate with us-'

'Well, that's genuinely nice and all.' She shrugs. 'But I am not sure you can stop it. It is a little out of your league, don't you think?'

I glance between her and her cat, knowing it is not at all out of my league.

Finding an antidote for Naddalin?

Could be. Helping my best friend stay in her zip code and save her cat?

Not much. There is plenty I can do. abundance. But still, I just look at her and say,

'We'll work something out. So never trust me, okay?

You can move in here with me and Jaylynn?' Nodding as though I mean it, even though Jaylynn would never have it.

But I still need to put something out there, provide comfort since it is not like I can voice what I am hoping to do.

'You'd do that?' She squints. 'Really?'

'Absolutely.' shook my shoulder. 'Whatever it takes.'

She swallows hard and gazes around, shaking her head when she says, 'You know I'd never take you up on it, but still, it's nice to know that even with all our rough spots you're still my best friend.'

I squinted, having always assumed it was Miles, not me.

'Well, you and Miles.' She is laughing. 'I mean, I can have two best friends-an heir and a spare, as they say?'

She wipes her nose again, shaking her head when she adds, 'I bet I look like crap, right? Go ahead, tell me, I can take it.'

'You don't look like crap,' I say, wondering why she is suddenly focused on her looks. 'You look sad.

There is- a difference... Besides, does it matter?'

'It does if you're considering whether or not you should hire me.' She shrugs. 'I have a job interview, but there is no way I can go looking like that. And it is not like I can bring Chrissa.'

I gaze at her cat, watching the life-force energy slowly slipping away, knowing I must move fast before it is too late. 'I will keep her. It is not like I am going anywhere anyway.'

She looks at me, wavering about whether she should leave her poor dying cat in my care. But I just nod, coming around to her side of the counter and lifting Chrissa out of her arms as I add, 'Seriously. Just do what you need to do, and I will babysit.' I smile, urging her to agree.

She hesitates, glancing between me and Chrissa, then rummages through her oversized bag for a small, handheld

mirror, before wetting her finger and clearing the mascara tracks from her cheeks.

'I shouldn't be long.' Sher grabs a black pencil and draws a thick, smudgy line around each eye. 'An hour? Two at the most?' She looks at me, trading the pencil for blush.

'All you must do is hold her and give her some water if she wants. But she will not. She does not want much of anything now.' She coats her lips with a swipe of gloss and rearranges her bangs, before flinging her bag over her shoulder and heading for the door. Climbing into her car as she turns to me and says,

'thanks. I need the job more than you think. I need to start saving some money so I can emancipate myself like Naddalin. I am tired of the crap.'

I look at her, unsure what to say. Naddalin's situation is unique. Not at all what it seems.

'And yes, I know, I probably won't be able to support myself in quite the same style as Naddalin, but still, I'd rather live in some crappy studio somewhere than be subject to my parents' impulsive decisions and were. Anyway, are you sure you are okay with that?'

I nod, hugging Chrissa tighter, mentally urging her to hold on, just a little bit longer, until I can help.

Haven slides her key into the ignition, the engine turning as she says, 'I promised Naddalin I would not be late. And if I hurry, I might be on time.' Checking her appearance in the rearview mirror as she shifts in reverse.

'Naddalin?' I freeze, my expression one of pure panic but unable to change it.

Sher shrugs, backing out of my drive as she calls, 'Her's the one who scored me the interview.' Waving as she

disappears down the street, leaving me with a dying cat in my arms, and no words to warn her.

'You can't do it,' she says, barely having opened the door before she is already shaking her head.

'You don't even know what I'm here for.' I frown, hugging Chrissa tightly to my chest, wishing I had not come here.

'The cat is dying, and you want to know if it is okay to save it and I am telling you it is not. You cannot do it.' She shrugs, reading the situation more than my mind, which I purposely blocked so

she cannot view my visit to Naddalin, which would set her on edge.

'Do you mean cannot as in not possible? Like the elixir will not work on a feline. Or cannot in the moral sense, as in do does not play God, never?'

'Does it matter?' She lifts her brow, stepping to the side and allowing me in.

'Of course, it matters,' I whimper, TV noise drifting down from upstairs, the twins' daily dose of reality shows.

She heads into the den, plopping onto the couch and patting the space right beside her. And even though I am

annoyed she is acting, not even giving me a chance to explain, I still join her, rearranging the blanket, hoping one look at Chrissa will convince her.

'I just don't think you should jump to conclusions,' I say, shifting my body so I am facing her. 'It is not as simple as you think. It is not black or white, it is mostly all gray.'

She leans toward me, gazes softening as she moves her thumb back and forth under Chrissa's whiskered chin. 'I am sorry, ever. Really.' She gazes at me before pulling away. 'But even if the elixir did work-which I'm not sure it would

since I've never tried it on an animal before, but even if it did-'

~*~

'Really?' I looked at her, surprised to hear that. 'You've never had a pet you could not bear to part with?' My eyes glaze over her, taking her in.

'Not one that I couldn't bear to lose, no.'

Shaking her head.

I narrow my eyes, not sure how I feel about that.

'Never, back in my day we did not keep pets in quite the same way. And

after I drank the elixir, I was not interested in owning anything that might tie me down.'

I nod, catching the way she gazes at Chrissa and hoping there's room to negotiate. ' Fine. No pets. I get it,' I say. 'But do you get how someone might become so attached to their kitty they cannot bear to say good-bye?'

'Are you asking if I know about attachment?' She looks at me, gazes heavy, steady, fixed right on mine. 'About love, and the unbearable grief that comes when it is lost?'

I gaze down at my lap, feeling juvenile, foolish. I should have seen that coming.

'There's much more at stake than just saving a cat or granting eternal life-if there even is such a thing in the animal kingdom. The real question is, how will you explain it to Heaven? What will you tell her when she returns only to find the dying cat, she left in your care is now miraculously cured-maybe even becoming a kitten again, who knows? How will you explain that to her?'

I sigh, not having thought about that. Had not considered that if it does

work, Chrissa would not just be healed, but physically transformed.

'It is not about it not working-I've no clue about that. And it is not about your right to play God-you and I both know I am the last one who should judge such a thing. It is more about safeguarding our secrets.

...And while I know you have only the best intentions at heart, in the end, helping your friend will only ignite her suspicion. Raising questions that can never be answered simply or logically without revealing too much. Besides, Haven's already onto us, or something at

least. So now, more than ever, it is important for us to lay low.'

I press my lips together, swallowing past the lump in my throat, hating that I have so many amazing tools at my disposal, all these magical abilities, but unable to use them, to help those whom I love.

'I'm sorry,' she says, hand hovering over my arm, hesitating to make contact until the veil comes along. 'But as sad as it seems, it really is just the natural course of events. And believe me, animals accept these things far better than people do.'

I lean into her shoulder, into her touch, amazed by her power to comfort me no matter how sad things get. 'I just feel so bad for her-her parents are always fighting-she might have to move-it is making her question the point of everything. Like I did when my world fell apart.'

'Never-ever-' her stares, gaze soft, lips looming so close, I cannot help but press mine against them-the moment cut short when the twins squeal their way down the stairs.

'Naddalin-Javion won't let me-' Rayne stops, standing before us, dark

eyes wider than usual when she says, 'Omigod is that a cat?'

I glanced at Naddalin. Since when does Rayne use words like 'Omigod?

But she just shakes her head and laughs. 'Don't get too close.' She glances between them. 'And keep your voice down. He is an extremely sick cat. I am afraid she does not have exceptionally long.'

'Then why don't you save it?' Rayne asks, prompting Javion to nod in agreement, the three of us gazing at Naddalin, our eyes wide and pleading.

'Because we do not do things like that,' she says, voice stern and parental. 'That's not how it's done.'

'But you saved Ever, and she's not nearly as cute,' Rayne says, kneeling before me 'til her face is level with Chrissa's.

'Rayne-' Naddalin starts.

But she just laughs, glancing between us when she says, 'Just joking. You know I am joking, right?'

I look at her, knowing she is not, but not willing to press it. About to get up, wanting to get Chrissa back before Haven returns when Javion kneels beside

me and places her hand on Chrissa's herald, closing her eyes as she chants a series of indecipherable words.

'No magic,' Naddalin scolds. 'Not the case.'

But Javion just sighs and sits back on her heels. 'It's not like it works anyway,' she says, still gazing at Chrissa. 'Sher looks just like Jinx at that age, doesn't she?'

'Which time?' Rayne giggles, nudging her sister as they both start to laugh.

'We may have extended her life a few times,' Javion says, cheeks pink as

she glances between us, prompting me to look at Naddalin and think: See?

But she just shakes her head. Again-Haven?

'Can we get a cat?' Javion asks. 'A black kitty like that?' Tugging on her sleeve while gazing at her in a way that is hard to resist. 'They're wonderful companions and particularly good around the house. What are you saying? Can we? Please?'

'It'll help us get our magic back,' Rayne adds, nodding at her.

I look at Naddalin, reading her expression and knowing it is as good as

done. Whatever the twins want, the twins get. Like- It is as simple as that.

'We'll discuss it later,' Naddalin says, trying a stern look, but the gesture's empty, everyone knows it but her.

I get up from the couch and head for the door, needing to get Chrissa back to the house before Haven returns.

'Are you upset with me?' Naddalin grasps my hand and leads me to my car.

I shake my head and smile. It is impossible to be mad at her, or at least not for exceptionally long. 'I'm not going to lie; I was hoping you'd be on my side.' I

shrug, coaxing Chrissa into her carrier, before leaning against the door and pulling her close. 'But it is not like I do not get your point. I just wanted to help Haven, that is all.'

'Just be there for her.' She nods, a dark gaze at me. 'That's all she really wants from you anyway.'

She leans in to kiss me, gathering me into her arms, her hands moving over me and warming me to my core. Pulling away to gaze at me with those deep soulful eyes, the rock to my feather, my eternal partner, whose intentions are so solid and good I can only hope she never learns of my betrayal, reneging on my

promise not to visit Naddalin just after saying I would not.

She cups my face between the palms of her hands and peers into my eyes. Sensing my mood shifts so easily it is as though they are her.

I avert my gaze, thinking about Haven, Naddalin, the cat, and all the mounting mistakes I cannot seem to stop making. Then clearing the thoughts and shaking my head, unwilling to visit that place when I say,

'See you tomorrow?' Barely finishing the words before she leans in to

kiss me again, a slip of energy pulsating between her lips and mine.

Then holding the moment for as long as we can neither of us is willing to break away, until a twin chorus of, 'Ewe! comprehensive! Do we really have to watch that?' All trails from the window upstairs.

'Tomorrow.' Naddalin smiles, seeing me safely into my car before heading inside.

Everything started fine. As fine and normal as any other day. I woke up, showered, dressed, stopped by the kitchen to toss some cereal down the sink

before chasing it with some OJ I would swishers in a glass-my usual morning routine so Jaylynn will think I ate the breakfast she made.

Nodding and smiling the whole way to school as Miles complains on and on about Holt, or France, or Holt and France, as I sit there beside her, stopping, turning, speeding, slowing, chasing yellow lights, waiting for the moment where I can see Naddalin again. Knowing the mere sight of her will turn all darkness to light, even if the effect is just temporary.

But the moment I pull into the lot the first thing I see is a mammoth-sized

SUV parked right next to the space Naddalin's saving for me. And I mean mammoth, as in big and ugly. And something about the sight of Naddalin leaning against that whale of a car fills me with dread.

'What?' Miles gapes. 'You give up riding the train so you can drive a train instead?'

I climb out of my Miata, glancing between Big Ugly and Naddalin, hardly believing my ears when he starts quoting a slew of statistics about its superb safety rating and roomy back seats. I mean, I do not remember her ever once caring about

the safety rating when he was chauffeuring me.

That is because you are immortal, she thinks, sensing my thoughts as we head for the gate. But may I remind you, the twins are not, and since they are now in my care, it is my job to keep them from harm.

I shake my head, gaze narrowed as I try to think of a snappy reply. My thoughts are interrupted by Haven who says, 'You're doing it again.' She crosses her arms and glances between us. 'You know, your whole, weird, pseudo telepathy thing.'

'Who even cares about that?' Miles screechers. 'Naddalin's driving a train!' She hooks her thumb over her shoulder, jabbing toward the big, black monstrosity and wincing at the sight of it.

'Is it a train or a mom's car?' Haven squints, shielding her eyes from the sun. Glancing at each of us. 'Whatever it is, one thing's for sure, it's tragically middle-aged.'

Miles nods fully warmed up to the subject now. 'First the glove and now the?' She frowns at Naddalin, disappointment clouding her face. 'I have no idea what you are up to, but man, you are seriously losing your edge. You are

not even close to the rock star you were when you first came to the school.'

I glance at her, eyes narrowed in silent agreement. But Naddalin just laughs, too concerned with the proper care and feeding of the twins to bother with what anyone thinks-including me. And while that is the way a good, responsible, parental-type figure should think, something about it bugs me.

Miles and Haven continue, teasing Naddalin about her new, surprisingly stodgy ways, as I tag along, a sliver of energy pulsating between us as she grabs my hand and thinks, what is going on? Why are you acting like this? Is

it because of the cat? I thought you understood all of that.

I stare straight ahead, focused on Miles and Haven, sighing loudly as I mentally reply: It is not the cat. We settled yesterday. She is back at Haven's, marking her days. It is just-well, it is like, here I am, making myself crazy, trying to find a solution so we can be together, and all you seem to care about is manifesting HDTVs and the world's ugliest baby proof car so you can cart the twins around town! I shake my head, knowing I need to stop before I go any further and have something to regret.

'Everything's changing,' I say, not realizing I said it aloud until the words ring in my ears. 'And I am sorry if I am acting like a brat, but I am just so frustrated that we cannot be together in the way that we want.

And, like- I miss you.

I miss you so bad I cannot stand it.' I pause, eyes stinging, throat hot and tight, threatening to close completely. 'And now that the twins are living with you, and with my new job starting and all, well, it is like, we are suddenly thrust into a super stressful, middle-aged life.

And trust me, seeing your new car just now did not help.' I peek at her, thinking there is no way I am riding in that thing. Instantly ashamed when I see her looking at me with such love and compassion, I cannot help but fold.

'I was hoping the summer would be great, you know.

I was hoping we could have some fun-just the two of us.

But now it is not looking so good. And, just to top things off, did I even mention that Jaylynn is dating Milley? My history teacher? Friday night, dinner at eight!' I scowl, hardly believing the

pathetic life belongs to a powerful, newly immortal, almost seventeen-year-old girl.

'You got a job?' She stops in place as her eyes search mine.

'Out of everything I just said, that is what you are focusing on?' I shake my head and pull her along, laughing despite myself.

But she just looks at me, gazes fixed on mine as she says, 'Where?'

'Mystics and Moonbeams.' I shrug, watching Miles and Haven wave as they turn down the hall and hear for class.

'Doing what?' She asks, not ready to drop it just yet.

'Retail stuff, mainly.' I gaze at her. 'You know, working the register, restocking shelves, giving readings, stuff like that.' I shrug, hoping she will not pay much notice to that last part.

Psychic readings? Her gapes, stopping just shy of our classroom.

I nod, staring longingly as my classmate's spill through the door, preferring to join them than having to finish what I started.

'Do you think that is smart? Drawing that kind of attention to

yourself?' Back to talking again now that we are alone in the hall.

'Probably not.' I shrug, knowing it is most definitely not. 'But Jaylynn insists the discipline and stability will do me some good. Or so she says. She just wants to watch me. And short of installing a babysitter cam, this is the easiest, least invasive way. She even had the horrible, soul-sucking, nine-to-five gig all set up and ready to go, so when Naddalin said he needed some help around the store, well, I did not have much choice but to-what?' I pause, seeing the look on her face, eyes guarded, hard to read.

'Naddalin?' Her eyes narrowed to where I could just barely see them. 'I thought you said someone named Lina owned the store.'

'Lina does own the store.

Naddalin's her grandson,' I say, only that is not entirely true. 'Well, she is not her real grandson, it is more like she looks after her. Helped raise her after she ran away from her last foster home-or-whatever.'

Shake my head.

The last thing I wanted was to start a conversation about Naddalin,

especially with the way Naddalin's gone high alert.

'I thought it might help, you know, allow unlimited access to books and things that might help us. Besides, it is not like I am working there under my real name. I am using an alias.'

'Let me guess.' She peers into my eyes, seeing the answer displayed in my thoughts. 'Avalynn. Cute.' She smiles, but only briefly before he has gone seriously again. 'But you know how it works, right? It is not like a confession where you are shielded by a screen. People expect face-to-face contact.

They want to see you know whether they can trust you. So, what exactly are you planning to do when someone you know just happens to walk in for an impromptu tarot card reading? Did you even think about that?'

I frown, wondering why she had to take what I thought was a good deal and turn it into a problem. And I am about to deliver some snappy reply, say something like Hello? I am psychic. I will know before they even get through the door! when Naddalin appears.

Naddalin and someone else-someone vaguely familiar-someone named

Marco who was last seen in a vintage Jaguar, pulling up to her house.

Walking side by side, legs moving swiftly, eyes focused on mine. Naddalin's gaze taunting, mocking, the proud owner of my dirty little secret.

Naddalin moves to shield me, gaze at Naddalin as he thinks: Stay calm. Do not do anything. I will handle it.

I peer over her shoulder, watching as Naddalin and Marco barrel toward us like an oncoming train. Gazing at me with eyes so deep, so blue, everything blurs but her moist grinning lips and flashing Ouroboros tattoo. And

the last thing I think, before I am sucked in completely, is that this is my fault. If I had kept my promise to Naddalin and stayed away from her, I would not be facing her now.

Her energy swirls toward me, tugging, pulling, luring me in, sucking me into a spiral of darkness, bombarding me with images of Naddalin-the tainted antidote-my ill-advised visit-Haven-Miles-France-the twins-all of it coming so quickly, I can barely distinguish between them. But the individual images themselves are not important-it is the whole she wants me to see. All of it meant to illustrate one single thing: Naddalin's

in charge now-the rest of us are just puppets, pulled by her strings.

'Morning', mates!' she sings, releasing me from her grip as my body falls limp against Nadalin.

But despite her sweet murmurings as she ushers me away from Naddalin and into the room, despite the soft reassurances intended to soothe, convinced that we have just dodged a bullet and it is over, for now, I happen to know it has only begun.

More is coming.

There is no doubt.

Naddalin's next shot is aimed solely at me.

After lunch, I heard about Mystics and Moonbeams. I am eager to start my on-the-job training, hoping it will provide a nice distraction from the mess otherwise known as my life.

It was bad enough when Naddalin kept disappearing between classes so he could check in on the twins, but by lunch, when I assured her, I was fine, that Naddalin would not bother me, and that her should just stay home, I headed for our table only to learn that Heaven has boarded the Naddalin train. Picking apart a vanilla-frosted cupcake while gushing

about the big part she played in securing her job at the vintage store, despite her arriving at the interview ten minutes late.

-And-

All I could do was mumble an occasional word of dissent, which did not go over so well. So, after her third excruciatingly dramatic eye roll, after telling me to relax and unclench for the umpteenth time, I tossed my uneaten sandwich and made for the gate. Vowing to keep an eye on her, do whatever it takes to keep them from getting together.

Just one more item on my growing to-do list.

I pull into the alley, parking in one of two spaces behind the store before heading toward the front, half expecting to find the door locked, figuring Naddalin could not resist the call of killer waves on such a beautiful day and surprised to find it wide open, with Naddalin behind the register, ringing a sale.

Part:

'Oh Henry, here's Avalynn now.' She nods. 'I was just telling Susan about our new psychic reader, and you walk in on cue.'

Susan turns, looking me over, scrutinizing, accessing, adding up all the

parts in hurl herald. Sure, she is faced with the equation when she says, 'Aren't you a little-young to be giving readings?' She gives me a smug look.

I smile, an awkward slanting of lips, as my gaze darts between them, unsure how to respond, especially with the way Naddalin's looking at me.

'Being psychic is a gift,' I mumble, nearly choking on the word. Remembering a time, not long ago, when I scoffed at the thought, sure it was anything but. 'It's got nothing to do with age,' I add, watching her aura flicker and flare, knowing I have failed to convince

her. 'You either have it, or you don't.' I shrug, digging myself a very deep hole.

'So, should I book you a reading?' Naddalin was smiling in a way that is hard to resist.

But not for Susan. Shaking her head and clutching her bag, she heads for the door, saying, 'You just give me a call when Lava comes back.'

The bell clangs loudly as the door closes behind her. 'Well, that went well.' I shrug, turning toward Naddalin and watching her file the receipt before adding, 'Is my age going to be a problem here?'

'Are you16?' she asks, barely glancing at me.

I press my lips together and nod.

'Then you are old enough to work here. Susan's a psychic junkie, she will not resist for long. She will be on your sign-up sheet before you know it.'

'Psychic junkie? Is that anything like a groupie?' I follow her to the office in the back, noticing he is wearing the same trunks and peace-sign tee as before.

'Can't make a move without consulting the cards, the stars, what have you.' She nods. 'Though I'm guessing you gathered your share of regulars during all

the readings you've given.' She glances over her shoulder as she opens the door, eyes narrowed, knowing, in a way I cannot miss.

'About that-' I start, figuring I may as well confess since she is on to me anyway.

But she just turns, raises her hand, and decides to stop me when she says, 'Please, no confessionals.' Smiling and shaking her head. 'If I have any hope of enjoying those huge swells out there, then I do not have the luxury of regretting my decision. Though you might want to rethink that bit about it being a gift.'

I look at her, surprised to hear her say that since all the psychics I have met, which, okay, consists of just Ava, but still, most of them think it is most certainly something you are born with.

'I'm thinking of adding some classes to the schedule, psychic development stuff, maybe even throw in some Wicca as well, and trust me, we'll get a lot more sign-ups if everyone thinks they have a fair shot.'

'But do they?' I ask, watching as she heads for an extremely messy desk and riffs through a pile of papers near the edge.

'Sure.' She nods, picking up a sheet, looking it over, then shaking her head as she swaps it for another.

'Everyone has potential; it is just a matter of developing it. With some it comes easy, they could not ignore it if they tried, with others-they must dig a little deeper to find it and you? And you? When did you know?'

She looks at me, those sea-green eyes meeting mine in a way that makes my stomach dance. I mean, one minute he is talking abstractly, thumbing through papers as though she is barely minding her words, then the next everything stops,

her gaze is on mine, and it is like time has stood still. Part:

I swallow hard, unsure what to say, part of me longing to confess, knowing he is one of the few who would understand, but the other part resists- Naddalin's the only one who knows my story, and I feel like I should keep it that way.

'Just born with it, I guess.' I lift my shoulders, cringing at the way my voice rose at the end. My eyes dart around the room, hoping to avoid the topic as well as her gaze when I add, 'So- classes. Who is teaching those?'

She shrugs, tilting her head in a way that allows her dreadlocks to fall into her face. 'Guess I will,' she says, pushing them back and revealing the scar on her brow. 'It is something I have been wanting to do for a while anyway, but Lina's always been against it. I figure I may as well take advantage of her not being here to see if it works.'

'Why's she against it?' I ask, stomach-settling when she leans back and props her feet on her desk.

'She likes to keep it simple: books, music, angel figurines, with the occasional reading thrown in. Safe.

Benign. Mainstream mysticism where no one gets hurt.'

'And your way? People get hurt?' I study her, trying to pinpoint just what it is about her that sets me on edge.

'Not at all. My goal is to empower people, help them live better, more fulfilled lives, by accessing their own intuition, that is all.' She glances at me, green eyes catching me staring, making my stomach go weird again.

'And Lina does not want to empower people?' I ask, feeling all fluttery under her gaze.

'With knowledge comes power. And since power tends to be corrupt, she thinks it is too big a risk. Even though I have no plans to go anywhere near the dark arts, she is convinced they will find their way in, that the classes I teach will only lead to harder, darker stuff.'

I nod, thinking of Naddalin and Heaven and seeing Lina's point. Power in the wrong hands is indeed a dangerous thing.

'Anyway, are you interested?' She then smiles.

My eyes meet her, unsure what she means.

'In teaching a class?'

I balk, wondering if he is joking or serious, then seeing what would be neither, just putting it out there. 'Trust me, I do not know the first thing about Wicca, or-or any of it really. I've no idea how it works. I am better off just giving the occasional reading, and even trying to organize the mess.'

I gesture toward her desk, the shelves, about every available surface that is buried beneath a mound of papers and junk.

'I was hoping you'd say that.'

'Oh, and just so you know, I clocked out

the moment you walked in. Gone surfing if anyone asks.'

She gets up, moving toward the surfboard leaning against the far wall.

'I do not expect you to get it completely organized or anything… it is too big a mess. But if you could get it into order, well,' she nods, looking at me.

'You just might get a gold star.'

'I'd rather have a plaque,' I say, pretending to be serious. 'You know, something nice that I can hang on the wall. Or even a statuette. Or a trophy-a trophy would be good.'

'How about your own parking space out back? I can swing that.'

'Trust me, you already have.'

'Yes, but that one will have your name on it. Reserved for you only. No one will be allowed to park in it, not even off hours. I will post a big warning that reads: CAUTION! THE SPACE RESERVED FOR AVALYNN ONLY. ALL OTHER WILL BE TOWED AWAY AT THEIR OWN EXPENSE.'

'You'd do that? For real?' I laugh, eyes meeting her.

She grabs her board, fingers gripping the edge as she heaves it under

her arm. 'You get the place cleaned up and there is no limit to the rewards that await you. Today Employee of the Month, tomorrow-' She shrugs, tossing her dreads off her forehead and exposing her amazingly cute face.

Our gazes lock, and I know she is caught me again-caught me looking-wondering-thinking she is cute. So, I quickly look away, scratching at my arm, fiddling with my sleeve, anything to move past the moment toward something less awkward.

'There's a monitor in the corner there.' She nods toward the far wall, back to business again. 'That, combined with

the bell on the door, should alert you to anyone coming in when you're working back here.'

'That, the bell on the door, and the fact that I'm psychic,' I say, trying to sound lighthearted, though my voice is a little shaky, having not fully recovered from the awkwardness before.

'Like the way you accessed your powers when I snuck up on you?' she asks, smiling in a nice open way, though her eyes are holding back.

'That was different.'

Shock my shoulder.

'You obviously know how to shield your energy. Most people do not.'

'And you know how to shield your aura.' Her squints, head cocked to the side, those golden dreadlocks falling halfway down her arm as she focuses on my right. 'But I'm sure we'll get to that later.'

I swallow hard, pretending not to notice how her vibrant yellow aura goes a little pink at the edges.

'Anyway, it is all self-explanatory. The files need to be alphabetized, and if you could separate them by subject, that would be great. Oh, and do not bother

tagging the crystals or herbs if you are not familiar with them, I would hate to get them confused. Though if you are familiar-' Her smiles, brow raised in such a way I immediately start scratching my arm again.

I gaze at the gleaming piles of crystals, some of which I recognize from the elixirs I made and the amulet I wear at my neck, but most of which are so foreign they are not even vaguely familiar.

'Do you have a book or something?' I ask, hoping she does since I would love to learn more about their amazing abilities.

'You know, so I can'-Find a way to sleep with my immortal boyfriend someday-'so I can get them all tagged properly-and-stuff.' I nod, hoping to appear like a hard worker rather than the self-motivated slacker I am.

Watching as she drops her surfboard and turns back toward her desk, shuffling through a pile of books and retrieving a small, thick, well-worn tome from the bottom of the stack.

Turning it over in her hands, and gazing at the back when he says, 'The has it all. If a crystal's not in it, it does not exist. It is also loaded with pictures so

you can identify them. Anyway, it should help,' she adds, tossing it to me.

I catch it between the palms of my hands, its pages vibrating with life as the contents surge through me. The entire book is now imprinted on my brain as I smile and say, 'Believe me, it already has.'

I stare at the monitor, making sure Naddalin has left before taking the seat behind the desk and gazing at the pile of crystals. Knowing the book alone was not enough-they need to be handled to be understood.

But just as I reach for a large red rock marked by streaks of yellow, my knee knocks against the side of the desk, and my entire body grows itchy and warm a sure sign that something needs my attention.

I push the chair back and lean forward, peering under the desk, noticing how the sensation grows stronger the lower I go. Following the feeling, until I have slid off my seat and dropped to the floor, fumbling around for the source, the tips of my fingers growing unbearably hot the second I touch the bottom left drawer.

I lean back on my heels, squinting at the old brass lock-the kind of deterrent

meant to keep honest people honest and dissuade those who do not know how to manipulate energy like me-closing my eyes as I ease the drawer open, only to find a pile of hanging files that are no longer hanging, an ancient calculator, and a pile of old and yellowed receipts. About to close it again when I sense the false bottom beneath.

I scoop up the papers and toss them aside before lifting the hatch and exposing an old, worn, leather-bound tome, its pages curled and fraying like a lost ancient scroll, the words Book of Shadows inscribed on its front. I place it onto the desk before me, then sit there

and stare. Wondering why someone would go to so much trouble to keep the book hidden-and from whom?

Is Lina hiding it from Naddalin?

And since there is only one way to find out, I close my eyes and press my palm to its front, planning to read it in my usual way until I am slammed by a surge of energy so intense, so frenetic, so chaotic-it practically snaps my bones.

I am hurled backward, my chair hitting the wall with such force it leaves a huge dent. The flickering remnants of random images still quivering before me and knowing full well why it was hidden-it

is a book of witchcraft and spells. Divinations and incantations. Containing powers so potent it would be completely catastrophic in the wrong hands.

I steady my breath and stare at the cover, calming myself before I attempt to thumb through it. Fingers twitching, touching only the edges, as I peer at a cursive so small it is impossible to decipher.

The bulk of the pages are inscribed with all manner of symbols, reminding me of the alchemical journals Naddalin's father used to keep carefully written in code to protect the secrets within.

I flip to the middle, taking in a fine, detailed sketch of a group of people dancing under a full moon, followed by those of similar people engaged in complex rituals. Fingers hovering above the scratchy old paper and suddenly knowing deep in my bones that there is no mistake. I was meant to find the book.

Just like Naddalin hypnotized my classmates and put them all under her spell, all I should do is weave the right incantation to convince her to divulge the information I need!

I turn the page, eager to find the right one, just as the bell on the shop door rings and I peer at the monitor to confirm

it. Unwilling to budge 'til I am sure they are not going to turn right around and leave, that they are deeply committed to staying.

Watching as the small, slim, black-and-white figure makes her way through the room-nervously glancing over her shoulder as though expecting to find someone there. And just as I am hoping she will leave, she goes straight for the counter, places her hands on the glass, and waits patiently.

It Was wonderful. I get up from the desk. Just what I need-a customer. Calling, 'Can I help you?' Before I have

even had a chance to turn the corner and see that it is Jewell.

The second she sees me she gasps, jaw-dropping, eyes widening, appearing almost-frightened? The two of us gape at each other, wondering how to move past the.

'Um, do you need something?' I say, voice sounding more confident than I feel, as though I am in charge around here. Taking in her long dark hair, the recent addition of copper streaks glinting under the lights, realizing I have never seen her alone until now. Never once been confronted by her, just the two of us, without Emmah or Mireille.

My mind wanders to the book in the back, the one I left on the desk, the one I need to return to at once, hoping whatever it is that she wants can be handled quickly and easily.

'Maybe I'm in the wrong place.' She pulls her shoulders in, twisting a silver ring around and around as her cheeks spot bright pink. 'I think I-' Sher swallows hard and glances back at the door, motioning awkwardly as she says, 'I made a mistake, so I'm-I'm just going to go-'

I watch as she turns, her aura glowing a tremulous gray as she heads for the door. And even though I do not want

to do it, even though I have a potentially life-changing, problem-solving book to return to, I say, 'It's not a mistake.'

She stops, shoulders hunched, looking small and diminutive without the aid of her bully friend.

'Seriously,' I add. 'You meant to come here.

And who knows? I can help.'

Sher takes a deep breath, pausing for so long I am about to speak again when she turns. 'There's the guy.' She picks at the hem of her shorts and gazes at me.

'Naddalin.' Sensing the answer without reading her thoughts or touching her skin, just knowing the moment my eyes meet her.

'Yes, um, I guess. Anyway, I um-' She shakes her head and starts again. 'Well, I was just wondering if she was here. She gave me them.' She pulls a crumpled piece of paper from her pocket and lays it flat against the glass, smoothing the creases as she peers up at me.

'She's not here,' I mumble, eyes glazing over the flyer advertising her Psychic Development Class level 1,

thinking how she wasted no time. 'You want to leave a message? Or sign up?'

I then study her carefully, never-ever having seen her so shy and uncomfortable before-with the ring twisting, eye darting, knee twitching-and knowing it is because of me.

She shrugs, gazing down at the counter as though fascinated by the jewelry inside. 'No, um, do not say anything. I will just come back some other time.' Sher takes a deep breath and pulls her shoulders back, trying to summon some of the usual revulsion reserved just for me, but failing miserably.

And even though part of me wants to soothe her, calm her, convince her there is no reason to act like the-I do not. I just watch as she leaves, making sure the door closes behind her before heading back to the book.

I do not think you ever really fall out of love with someone. I think when you fall in love, like true love, it is love for life. All the rest is just experienced and delusions.

Contented: 1

(Back to Black, and the paper)

I remember Stan recalling his story of what happened.

And Scary looking' fang, indeed? said Stan, who had been watching Naddalin read back the moments that were printed with the story of her book.

Then she- murdered thirteen people ha was added into this? said Naddalin, handing back to Stan the notebook of the draft she was writing to be published, and with one curse, history is made?

-And-

Yep, said Stan, in front of witnesses and all.

It was in broad daylight even.

Big trouble it caused said Ern darkly, didn't it, Ern? Who is Ern? She said not long after, to Stan who was looking over at her adjacently sitting also in the same booth, Stan swiveled in his armchair, his hands on the back- better to look at Naddalin.

-And-

Besides Black encourages a big supporter of- You-Know-Oo, she- said.

Then Naddalin said, without thinking. And what about Ava? Even Stan's pupils went white- as if dark energy were in him and was being controlled by another person.

Then the train jerked back, so hard that a whole farmhouse had to jump aside what looked like to the one side to avoid being streamed over with the darkness. Then and still on top of it with the lamp beam in front shining upon it, and then looking again the farmhouse was Nevaeh's old home and the tree was nothing more than a stump, as we made our way to yet another porthole to the other side. And as Emmah said, it feels a whole lot safer when inside a vehicle than out there.

...And you ought to be glad you are in here and not thinking you are being run over by all her past ghosts, he said- ‘I

knew that girl.’ She was nuts!!! ...yelped Stan…

Sorry, said Naddalin hastily, but I know her too well, I even dated her, and it is not all how you make her out to be in this story that she made in her head to give all, she was in an accident mind, and traumatized by it, not mentally but next to it. And Sorry, I - I forgot -that you know everyone… and everything, as told by a book, you believe the bible too?

…And forgot- you are not a girl destines for hell, that you were just another dumb kid! Besides, he said weakly. Get the evil eyes, a girl that was becoming more than pissed.

And Joannah, my heart's going that fast… over all of this… one being over you too, two being over the rail line being all crazy, and three being over all the news of Black. He said sitting on the bench beside them both, bickering.

Part:

-And-

So-o, - so? Black was a supporter of the mother and her girls, as I wonder if we should be too?

And, Naddalin prompted apologetically, said ‘I don't think so-o.’

‘Oh yes,’ said Stan, still rubbing his chest from getting punched, she is,

and was all they said she was, and still is I feel ‘a nut,’ sorry to disagree with you all that love ‘a crazy girl.’

‘And yes, that is right, now that you feel that way? Then we are over.’

Why?

‘I am the crazy girl.’

He is close to them to fainting, even realtering the idea in his mind with the look of the bloody murder of his soul.

~*~

They say… anyway when little Naddalin- got her- better of You-Know-Oo- the mother of the four girls.

‘Yes, and I am one of the girls, and there were more than 4 of us too.’

And Ava's object of desire- forever, NEVER- EVER letting go of her longing for lust- and love, even if… even if she has no looks of the former girl she once was. Therefore, she called her the tower, see her the tarot card… show is a formidable force to be reckoned with, the mother then?

'Yes!'

Then - Naddalin nervously flattened her bangs down again - And All-You-Know-Oo's supporters were tracked down, weren't they, Stan?

Most of them knew it was all over, when- You-Know-'Oo went absent for both worlds, and they came silently for years. Like us, we knew she was planning and was up to no good.

But not Tirus Black.

I heard her- thought I would be second-in-command once You-Know-'Oo' took over your mind, body, and soul. But no- it went down her side of the family more than his- Chiaz, somehow Emmah would have been a little niece, why she was also tinted by the evil hands of the hex of the girl's family and mother, some say that Emmah was Chiaz unborn child, a child that he never had, that only lived

for 48 hours (about 2 days), within Nevaeh, and passed, over running out of air, she was baby number two, also a hex within the family every baby that is number two passes. Yet this was never really talked about, Jaylynn death was more heart barking.

And anyway, they cornered Black in the middle of a street full of humans and Black took out his revenge on the would kill all that were in his path and blasted 'em right in the- street all apart brain splattered the roadway, and a wizard got it to see it all, that wizard was- Naddalin dad, who understood the why… of it all, know it was the hex, nothing

more nothing less, it took over his mind, its little girl in pain always.

A reporter for the press said about her story after her death, in not so many words. 'Someone like Nevaeh- if they believe in the supernatural, that she was losing her wit and mind. it was said to me that she says- Ghost's- OOO-HA!' AND HIS HANDS SHOOK MUCKING HER.

Hum so maybe that unborn child was a hunt for years- that she was in the glass that leads to the other side, the mother was seeing her baby, that is it- she was never crazy- said Naddalin swiftly. Their typewriter printed out

would give clues to that also, matching her story.

'Horrible, eh? And you know what Black did then? And then at that moment at that time, Stan continued in a dramatic whisper.

...And What? And said Naddalin.

...And Laughead said, Stan. ‘And just stood there and laughed. And' when reinforcements from the head of the Diaconate of Magic got there went with em quiet as anything, still laughing his head off.'

-And-

.... And if she- were not she- went to Dezerland, she- would be now, and said Ern in her slow voice. And I would blow Mes's fairy up before I set foot in that place. Serves her right, mind you… after what she- did…

-And-

...And She-had a job covering' it up, din' they, Ern?

.... And Stan said.

.... And 'Ole Street blew up and' all then nonmagical people died. What was it they said,' ...and, appended, Ern?

-And-

...And Gas explosion, And grunted Ernie.

...And a' now's out, and said Stan, examining her- newspaper picture of Black's gaunt face again. And never been a breakout from Dezerland before, 'as there, Ern? Beats meows did it. Frightening', eh? Mind, I Do not fancy the Dezerland guards, eh, Ern?

-And-

Ernie suddenly shivered.

...And talk about Summat else, Stan, there is a good youth. the Dezerland guards give me the collywobbles.

-And-

Stan reluctantly put the paper away, and Naddalin leaned against the window of the Knight Train, feeling worse than ever. She- could not help imagining what Stan might be telling her passengers in a few nights' time.

'Then about that Naddalin-?

Exploited her aunt!

Samir on the Knight Train did not we, Erns're was trying to run for it…

-And-

She-, Naddalin, had broken wizard law just like Tirus Black. Was inflating Aunt Marge bad enough to land her in Dezerland? Naddalin did not know

anything about the wizard originally, though everyone she would ever they spoke of did so in the same fearful tone.

Dargie, who is at the school for girls' gamekeepers, had spent two months there only last year. Naddalin will not soon forget the look of terror on Bride's face she-n she- had been told there she-was going, And Darkside was one of the bravest people Naddalin knew.

The- Knight Train rolled through the darkness, scattering sarnies and wastebaskets, telephone booths and trees, And Naddalin lay, restless and miserable, on her daddy's bed.

After a while, Stan remembered that Naddalin had paid for hot Havannah collate but poured it all over Naddalin's pillow when the train moved abruptly from Anglesea to Aberdeen.

One by one, wizards and witches in dressing gowns and slippers descended from shoe-upper floors to leave the train. They all looked incredibly pleased to go.

Finally, Naddalin was her- only passenger left.

And right then, Javion, and said Stan, clapping her hands, And whereabouts in Pennsylvania?

-And-

And, then Lovett Passageway, said Naddalin.

‘And right too,’ said Stan. And then 'Old tight walkway was showing his sight, then- BANG. BANG. BANG. BANG.

She was thundering along Charing Cross Railroad Tracks. Naddalin sat up and watched buildings and benches squeezing she- themselves out of the Knight Train's way, and souls following behind them.

Then- the sky was getting a little lighter. She- would lie low for a couple of hours, go to Buchanan she- moment it

opened, she-n set off - there, she- did not know.

Ernie AKA Ern slammed on the brakes and she- Knight Train skidded to a halt in front of a small and shabby-looking pub, the Leaky Cauldron Jinger, behind which lays the magical entrance to Lovett Passageway.

And, Thanks, And Naddalin said to Ern.

She- jumped down the steps and she-helped Stan lowers her trunk And Baby Raven's cage onto the pavement.

And, well then said Naddalin. And Bye then!

-And-

But... Stan was not paying attention. Still standing in the doorway to see- train, she was giggling at her- shadowy entrance to see- Silvanus restaurant Jinger.

...And There you are, Naddalin, and said a voice.

Before Naddalin could turn, she felt a hand on her shoulder. At the same time, Stan shouted, `` Joannah! Ern, come here! Come here!

-And-

Naddalin looked up at the owner of the hands-on her shoulder...

...And felt many bucketsful of ice just cascade into her and Savannah – she and her - had walked right into Jack Harlan, going into the Martita of Magic, with her swiftly.

Stan leaped onto her- pavement beside her.

And, What Dija call Javion, Martita? And she- said excitedly.

Harlan, an overweight little man in a long, pinstriped Robe, looked cold and exhausted.

And Javion? And she- repeated, frowning. And She is Naddalin.

-And-

And I knew it! And Stan shouted gleefully. And Ern! Ern! Guess Oo Javion is, Ern!' Esary-!

I can see his scar!

-And-

Arry-! I can see his scar!

-And-

~*~

Furthermore yes, then said Harlan testily,

Furthermore well, I am extremely glad she- Knight Train picked Nadalin up, but she- and I need to step inside she-Silvanus restaurant Jinger now…And

Harlan increased the pressure on Nadalin's shoulder, Including Nadalin finding her fairy being steered inside the pub. A stooping figure bearing a lantern appeared through the door behind the bar. It was Havannah, the wizened, toothless property owner.

And now there you have her, Martita!

And at once said Havannah.

And will you be wanting anything?

Like, would like Beer, Brandy, and or a pot of tea, coffee.

Moreover, said Harlan, who still had not let go of Nadalin.

There was a loud scraping and puffing from behind her, and Stan and Ern appeared, carrying Nadalin's trunk and baby raven's cage, and looking around excitedly.

Oh, how come you did not tell us you are, eh, Javion? And at once said Stan, beaming at Nadalin, while Ernie's flying horse dish face peered interestingly over Stan's shoulder.

Plus, at once a private parlor, please, Savannahian said Harlan pointedly.

Then bye, also Nadalin said miserably to Stan, likewise, Earn as Havannah beckoned Harlan toward her- a passage that led from a shoe- bar.

Likewise, I met her!

Then like flying horses are part of the dark side also there is not.

Then at that moment at that time, he said loudly, ‘she killed all of them people!’

It was me who rescued Nadalin from Lily an' Alyssa's house after they were killed and tracked her down! Just got her out of there before everything was

in dilapidations, ‘poor little thing a woman ran up and hugged her.’

‘You monster,’ she spoke looking at Stain.

At that moment with his wand that made into a folding Blade Knife with a great slash across Naddalin's forehead, he tried to kill her.

Including then he said they are all dead over you… I know who you are.

Then Tirus Black turns up, on that flying wagon they- used to ride in.

As a protection to his child daughter, ‘never occurred to me, that you still needed daddy, to fix your mess.’

‘What she- was doing there, is being a friend to you nothing more.’ Said, Black.

Black- 'I did know there have been so many lies made for you to believe, about Lily and Alyssa's all.'

'Secret-Keepers, aren't they?'

Though she had just looked at them both agonizing, without delay she-knew it was, all just a plane from day one by, 'You-Remember-Whom.'

'The mother and grandparents, that's right.' He said, holding the dagger over her had dribbled.

Looking over it all was Professor McDermott. 'Also, keep your voice down! There is no need to make a since.'

Who is attack and come to see what she could do in helping Naddain. White an' shaking', she- was.

And you understand comprehend what I did? I COMFORTED HER- as part of her soul was MURDERED.' Hypocrite! And Dargie roared.

-And-

How did I know she- was so upset about. Lily and Alyssa?

‘It was power she- cared about!’

And then at that moment in that place and time she- said.

'Give Nadalin over to me, Titus Black, I'm her god daddy, I'll look after her.'

Ha!

But I had had my orders from these sisters, and I told Black no.

Duerre said to Naddalin that it was her go time she knew her mom and dad really was and all her sisters. Not just the aunt and uncles. Black argued, but in the end, he- gave in to saying he was not her true dad. Told me to take her horse to get Naddalin there.

I will not need you anymore,' she-says yelling.

-And-

I should have known there was something more to all of this exceptionally suspicious going on then and now.

(Thought)

I was thinking at the thought of, 'she loved that horse, what was she-giving it up to me for?'

Contented: 2

-And-

How did I know she- was so upset about this. Lily and Alyssa and finding out her true blood?

‘It was the power she cared out saying moreover making us all disabilities, likewise revolting,' she cried!’

And now you all look schizophrenic so maybe, just maybe she and they were right? Said Stain.

'They,' now who is? Naddalin, who is no other than Nevaeh herself.

And then at that juncture in that place and time she- said.

'Give Nadalin over to me, screamed Titus Black, I'm her I was

always like her daddy, I'll look after her now also.'

'Ha!'

Whereas I had had my orders from these sisters you see, and I told you, Black- 'NO.'

Duerre said to Naddalin that it was her TIME TO GO, the time she knew was coming started by her mom and never any father was noted to save her life from this moment now of the time of final death and all her sisters would be her to take part in seeing the end of Nevaeh.

They are around, slowly enveloping me in this minuscule enclosure that you could call a garret.

As they whisper their evil thoughts, I could hear them all being me, and see all the visions of what was to come before they did in my head, of the far future of defeat doom, and gloom.

They thirst for death to dribble upon the very floor we stride on and deliver us the atrocity of how energy is truly is.

Not our mirror-like misconception that we could exclusively see, some only

scratch the surface and though they have seen misery.

Whereas truthfully in point that they did not glimpse anything, not even a peek at what suffering could exist.

Oh, I desire so inadequately to be so immature like the considerable others who live in this undersized outlandish place I call my dwelling.

'It wouldn't humiliate me one bit to be called silly because thoughtlessness is ecstasy.'

(Wounder Naddalin.)

Whereas when has my life ever been so plenty?

The day when I was endowed with the best aptitude, I ever got in my energy was the same day I transpired to die.

Not just the aunt and uncles have the say when and where I thought. Black argued, in moments where time would stand still but, in the end, last and hold frozen.

'I gave in to communicating he was not her true dad.'

She knows, what you do not know is who she really is.

She is 'Nevaeh.' and always was.

'They all look the same no, it was easy.' Said, Black.

Told me to take her horse to get Nevaeh's there away from all of this.

I will not need you anymore,' she-says yelling.

-And-

I should have known there was something more to all of this exceptionally suspicious going on then and now.

(Thought)

I was thinking at the thought of, 'she loved that horse, what was she- giving it up to me for?'

Why wouldn't she- need it anymore?

The actuality was it was too easy. Duerre knew she had been the keeper of secrets, Black knew she- was going to have to run after it that night, knew it was a matter of hours before the instrumentality was after her.

‘Despite when a prestidigitator goes over the dark side like some of the sisters, there is nothing we can do.'

‘And no one that matters to me anymore… Naddalin and Nevaeh are the same, under a good evil cover, that is the fight here. And despite what if, even if given more time, eh? I bet she would still be burnt alive and killed and dumped out of the magical sea remember as a fool that she is.’ Said Stain.

‘Just like the great-granddaughter.’

(Chatter was all around them from others.)

‘She was your friend and your girl! How can you just sell her out like this?’

-And-

A long silence followed Neaveh's story. She and Madam Esparza said with some fulfillment, and despite not managing to disappear did she been without all along, did she do this for us?

Continued:

(Time rewinds to the moments.)

The administration of Magic visited her the next day!

-And-

Alas was looking at them all. If solely we had new all along, said Harlan

painfully. And it was not we who found her. It was little Nevaeh, friends trust.

This was all by grief, no doubt, and knowing that Black had been the secret keeper, and Nevaeh… that small little girl who was always labeling around after Lily at the school? Said Madam Rosmerta.

Always the same girl now as she was then stupid, now looking down from above at her all in a grouping in a row of many sets.

And then and now- worshipped Black, not like a dad but a lover, then

communicated to, Professor McDermott the passion she had with all males.

And never quite in their association was being right to the world they wear part of, talent-wise she was always less. I was constantly intense with her. You can imagine how I... how I... regret that now, never saying this until now. And declared as though she had had a sudden head cold in thinking about the idea of this all.

And there, now, is Minerva, and said Harlan kindly, And Nevaeh died a hero's death as a child.

Eyewitnesses would say the same, all the township she was part of after she passed as a child, of course, we wiped her memories later- as it took time for all wonderful minds to find their place in time, told us how she cornered Black to keep her death then hidden as she made this change to one of the others.

They say she- was sobbing, 'Lily and Alyssa, and even Tirus!'

'How could you?' Tirus Black said.

And then she reached for her scepter.

Considerable sparks and wisping were made all around the room and on the well, of course,

Black was quicker to this was amateurish by all to even think or say about them.

Nevaeh was going to be remembered in this life and in the history of Earth, and always within her hometown.

Then Professor McDermott blew her nose, knowing the truth about the lingering of this mind, to say all others, and said thickly, and foolish girl, ridiculous girl, you did extraordinary

things. She was always hopeless to her own mind, at dueling with pain, should have left it to all of you to make it true- Ministry.

‘And I tell yeh, if I had gotten her Black before you all think you did, I would not have messed around with wands - I would have ripped her limb off from - limb to limb and covered her in horse shit.’ Said Alyssa.

And you do not know what you are talking about, all said Black, along with saying- she can never die.

Then said Harlan sharply. Black is right, Nevaeh will linger in others, as

just Naddalin or 'others' there is no stopping her from taking power over all of us.

And nobody but trained triumph sorcerers from a shoemaker like magical law enforcement crew would have stood a chance against Nevaeh once she is cornered, she is too powerful.

Harlan's voice stopped abruptly. There was the sound of five noses being blown.

(One speaks up in the background.) I was Junior Martita in the department of magical catastrophes at the time, and I was one of the first on the

scene after Nevaeh with her disciples murdered all those people, for her mind thinking ill-advised in the wrath of the afterlife.

She is holding 35 lbs. box set of all her life stories on her parts on her lap and stacked beside her astray and unkempt and untidy with many note sheets hanging out of the pages of the volumes.

I - I will never forget it. I still dream about it sometimes think how part of me has died.

A find myself now hollow in the epicenter of my body, mind just like a

street. So deep it had cracked the sewer below.

Bodies are everywhere in the graveyard where I was meant to be kept as a body. Yet my soul is lost like all the feeling of love at this place in the world I once knew.

Screaming all the screams of the dead... I see all of them in hell with me as I departed this world and made my way to limbo in the world, I made my own.

And Black standing there laughing saying you have become the God of the fallen souls.

And with what was left of Nevaeh just in front as the soul pulled away from the fallen angel body, there were the moments of them all being glimpsed stark divested.

And just like a girl lost to the muscles of rebirth in the moments of much of death seeing them all in the bloodstained robes.

And memories scattered and lost to the wind in time as remembrances and a few fragments of the laughter of children cry. And with logic but no truth.

-And-

My mind or soul I will not need it anymore,' she- says out loudly.

And I should have known there was something equivocal going on then.

She loved everyone here unconditionally, what was given away was her youth, her life, and she knew everything for others, even for me and you as well.

Why wouldn't she- need it anymore, her life that is she has done nothing but devastation? Said the others.

The fact was it was too easy.

Duerre knew she had been the keeper of the secrets.

Black knew she- was going to have to run after it that night- she lost soul and find it and move it to a glass crystal ball, and they both knew it was a matter of hours before the Ministry was after her to end her life last life for good.

And but what if I had given in and would last now as only Naddalin and forget the past me, eh now looking my life over now and back until this point I have seen that was true. My past life was saved as a soul in this crystal ball, for this moment of recalling.

And to think anyone could have taken this from me now and could have

pitched it off halfway out the sea lost like a message in a bottle.

Emmah, now she is the best friend a girl can have to keep me safe! Just like Black, you are the best. Said Naddalin that night in moments of tiredness and weakness within her bed worm and yielded to say more.

But then a prestidigitator goes over the dark side, there is nothing more I can do, this is my story to come and no one that matters to me anymore… then you all, I will become your lord.

-And-

Emmah holding Naddalin walked to the room of necessities with the sound of Nevaeh lost deep in the swirling glass ball.

Then in the kiss of the glass ball, the kiss deepened, out came the life that was lost and held for a time to pass until the time of now, their fingers intertwined in Emmah's sodden light ringlets, Naddalin's trepidation began to disband. What did it matter if they were both unclothed in the room of Necessity?

The superior method that anyone could enter and discover would be to ask particularly for a jacuzzi that looked like an Enchanted Fairy Grotto. The

circumstances of such a happening were vanishingly smallish.

Naddalin let herself move, her craving advancing, lips tracing a path to Emmah's neck, fingers disentangling and roaming southward as Nevaeh was remade.

Peeking onward and breezes agitated in the bubbling cauldron, and sparks of magic began to wash as the fervor grew, and the tandem started to lose themselves in one another.

Love and life were made to give a new life start.

Part:

Just moments letter Ms. Ashly scowled, handing the missive from the Triwizard Commission around to the principal. Professor Klaas placed the missive down and reached into his desk.

'I presume we'll be requiring this,' he said, tugging out a bottle of Dragon Barrel brandy.

He then streamed a snifter each for his sidekick principal and the Potions authority as well as himself.

Neither of the instructors chaperoning the principal introduced any objections. The angry deputy principal

took an immense drink from her snifter before communicating.

'So,' raged Ashly. 'There is no way that we can control this all. ...Nor at least have some say as to what sorts of creatures and otherworldly obstructions are to be operated on?'

'I do not believe so,' Klaas sighed.

'It appears quite unmistakable that we have been forestalled from retaining any infusion ourselves.

We can only be grateful that the Screws bred for the task at the insistence of the sorcerer committee have been massacring each other off.

Hopefully, their choice is few departed by the time June reaches.'

Gonzales and Ashley both snorted at the notion that Blacks needed encouragement from an outside agency to breed scary creatures.

Whereas, at the commencement of the year, the Commission had allocated Black the crystal made by breeding a life from more than one soul, knowing that Black would be all too eager to comply, despite Klaas's reticence.

'And what of the Void with complete emptiness was lasting?'

Ashly wondered aloud. 'Perhaps Black's mate Jaylynn will have some power?'

Gonzales rolled his eyes.

About the time that Ms. Ashly frowned, passing the letter from the sorcerer, and fallen angel empowerment back to the principal. Professor Klaas put the missive down and reached into his desk.

'I think we'll be requiring this,' he said, tugging out a bottle of Dragon Barrel brandy.

He then poured a snifter each for his assistant principal and the Elixirs primary as well as himself.

Neither of the professors escorting the principal extended any protests. The irate assistant principal carried a big glass from her snifter before communicating.

'Don't be so naive, it was said,' the Elixirs primary snickered. 'Actually, like if Nevaeh is so controlled, without his company to stay with them, the fallen chosen by the pastorate for the mission will not obey her order when the blood of sorcerers and fallen angels calls to them.

We must encounter facts - there are no things we can do unless the advocates cue for service.

That day there was a challenge for the youth as lasting memoirs of all the death. 'The warding talismans positioned around the Labyrinth by the committee will prevent any instructor or principal from penetrating the labyrinth unless we are presently anointed upon to furnish help.'

'But we know less than half of what the conquerors will be facing in the labyrinth,' splintered Ashley. 'Klaas, unquestionably the committee can deliver

us at least a clue of what else they have in supply for the conquerors.'

The principal laughed again. 'Alas, Ms. she said, our hands are fastened.

You know as well as I do that the pastorate is in corrupt hands. The most reasonable I can do is to confirm that all the conquerors and their mentors are as knowledgeable as ourselves. I shall consult with Emmah and Jaylynn on the morrow...'

At that juncture, one of Klaas's delicate tools began to whir and oscillate remarkably, disgorging sparks and a

breath of moisture. The lanterns flitted and a tiny tremor vibrated the headquarters.

Fawkes demoralized his feathers and uttered a little squawk. Snape's eyebrows drilled up in wonder.

'Good Heavens!' shouted Ashley. 'What in this world was that?'

'I do not know,' responded the principal, examining as baffled as to his staff components. He ascended out of his core fast and examined several of his contraptions, including the one which had flashed.

'There materializes to own existed some ilk of otherworldly, paranormal and supernatural power surge in the castle,' said Klaas after a juncture, 'Nevertheless, there is no sign of castle breach, nor of shady ghostly metaphysical incursion. Is anyone running an experiment at the juncture? Nunez possibly?'

'Not to my understanding,' said Ashley.

'If I may, Headmaster, conceivably we just participated the effects of an eruption of accidental charm someplace in the castle,' suggested Gonzales. 'As remarkable as it may be, on

experience, teenagers can still exist given such circumstances.'

'Ha hum...' Klaas caressed his long silvery hair pensively. 'You may be onto something, Mr. Gonzales.

Such has certainly happened in history.

Nevertheless, this express outbreak must have been remarkably influential to have stunned the entire castle.'

'Bloody Hell, Emmah! What was that? What happened?' Still overwhelmed and touching foolish from their lively watery escapade, Naddalin studied at her missis expectantly. Emmah giggled

nervously as the rapture of passion began to the movement of the tide out to sea.

'I... I am not sure, Naddalin, but if I had to guess, I would say it was an unanticipated avoidance of trance. I presume it is something that must transpire to illusionists periodically when they have interaction - specifically if it is reasonable and they are, truthfully in love...'

They say she- was sobbing, 'Lily and Alyssa, Tirus! How could you?' And she-n she- went for she wand. Well, of course, Black was quicker.

And Professor McDermott blew her nose and said thickly, stupid girl… foolish girl… she- was always hopeless at dueling… should have left it up to us.

Then Naddalin slammed her- album shut, reached over, and stuffed it back into the shoe cabinet, took off her robe and glasses, and got into bed, making sure she- hangings were hiding her from view.

The- dormitory door opened.

And Naddalin? And said Jinger's voice hesitation.

But Naddalin lay still, faking to be asleep. She- she- heard Jinger leave

again, and rolled over on her back, her eyes wide open.

A hatred such as she- had never known before was coursing through Naddalin like a poor girl. She- could see Black laughing at her through the darkness, as though somebody had pasted the picture from the album over her eyes. She- watched, as though somebody was playing her a piece of film, Tirus Black blasting Nevaeh.

Emmah peered at the churning water and the crystalline stalactites of the Room of Requirement's Fairy Grotto, an idea forming in her whirring brain.

'Hmm... Well, there were two of us for one thing, strengthening the magic exponentially,' she expressed, turning negligibly pink. 'We both... erm... peaked at the identical time.

Furthermore, in the dampness - it is like when an electrical charge is introduced to saltwater. It may have manipulated the charm - further strengthened it - and emitted it into the castle walls.'

A life made into a thousand pieces sure it is going to be like a hex. She could hear (though having no idea what Black's voice might sound like in a

new life within an old life) a quiet, keen murmur.

And it has occurred, hello my Goddesses my God… said Emmah. You are the world's pristine Lord, Emmah, she has made me alive, the keeper secret- for this moment was now over.

And then came another representative, chortling shrilly, then the same laugh that Naddalin had hard inside her head was passed to the soul in the ball of crystal. Two things had become one.

In obscure darkness, was the light, all around where death devours

many pulling like gliding, wraithlike dark critter, widely regarded to be one of the stormiest of the dark beasts to populate the fallen angel world.

Death Devours provided magical life and pleasure and thus induced sensations of despair and discomfort in someone in nearest immediacy to them.

They could furthermore destroy a person's core, a takeaway the truth of the heart. Vamoosing their prey in an enduring vegetative state, and thus were often referred to as '*soul- pulling villains.*' And the individuals they left soulless existed believed to have been twisted into an 'empty shell'.

Death Devours is near associated with Zenon penitentiary, as they existed onetime utilized by the church of spells as the penitentiary safeguards and were not comprehended to always occupy any other establishment. Drew nearby… A Neveah was why there were made. By her evil family to take mind body and soul away from her.

And Naddalin was next as they knew the bits of soul were still lost within her of Nevaeh and her energy, you look horrendous. And Naddalin had not gotten to sleep until daybreak with them all at the foot of her bed looking deep into her eyes and hovering over her.

She- had awoken to find the dormitory deserted, dressed, and gone down the spiral staircase to a shared room, that was empty except for Jinger, who was eating a peppermint and stroking her, and Emmah how could not see anything but another type of complete darkness, who had spread her homework over three tables was lost in her disability in frustration.

'Genuinely?'

'I do not know, Naddalin. I am just inferring - I cannot be confident.'

'Freedom!' Naddalin bobbed, swallowing anxiously.

'Well, that makes as considerably sense as anything I presume - let us get out of here.'

There was a small chink of glass on the wood.

Someone had set down their glass.

And you know, Harlan, if you are eating with her- principal, we would head back up to sue- castle, and said, Professor McDermott.

One by one, the pairs of feet in front of Naddalin took the- weight of their owners once more; then robes swung into sight, and Madam Rosmerta's glittering

then evaporated behind the bar. The- door or she- opened Boussiney Citadel furthermore, there was another flurry of snow, and her instructors had disappeared.

And now you need to sit down, Naddalin, said Harlan, revealing a chair by the fire.

Naddalin did not have an extremely straightforward thought of how they had contrived to get back into the Yeanworth Castle basement, though the labyrinth of the tunnel, and into the castle once more.

All she- understood was that she-yield expedition took no duration at all and that she scarcely noticed what she-was doing because her new mind and head with its new crowning halo was still pounding with the conversation she had just listened to.

Naddalin fervently expected that there had been no injury and that they could avoid getting into trouble like her sisters.

Slapdash, Natalie's Natalie dressed and fled the room of Necessity. Naddalin's incredibly thumping soul began to stall with less glowing energy when it materialized that there were no

panicking flocks in the hallways of the castle, and everything appeared intact.

Though all yearnings of forgetting about the incident completely were dashed when they found themselves in the splendid vestibule at the feast. A long silence ensued in Dargie's anecdote.

Then Madam Rosmerta communicated with some satisfaction, and though they did not address to evaporate, did they? The pastorate of trance snagged up with her the following day!

They came tardily.

Seated at the mingling table already were some of their companions.

Underneath normal events, Naddalin would have been happy to see Emmah, Jaylynn, and Karly among them.

Though they emerged to be profound in dialogue regarding unusual events.

'...And me and Emmah were playing fallen angel chess by the window...' Emmah was describing Nadia and Maria.

'And I was failing as expected,' Karly added.

-And-

'...And it clattered so painfully I was sure it was going to break,' Emmah persisted.

Jaylynn rolled her eyes. 'It wasn't that challenging.'

'I didn't catch it at all,' Neville sounded in.

'Nor I,' said Karly. 'I was in my room, and I did not discern a thing.

Whereas I did see the lights twinkling.'

At that juncture, Emmah noticed Naddalin and Emmah taking their stools.

'Oh, hi, Naddalin, Emmah,' said Jaylynn excitedly, 'Did you feel that castle-quake?'

'Er...' said Naddalin as she blushed.

Part:

She glimpsed at Emmah, whose cheeks retained also taken on a flush glimmer.

Fortunately, Naddalin was saved from replying by the appearance of the dinner.

She lived in a deep sigh of solace and initiated to crease in.

Emmah was equally satisfied with the distraction that the meals furnished.

Becky observed Natalie's with entertainment, guessing that they had been too occupied to witness the temblor.

The darkness was stern and waterless.

A braggart swaggered in the moonlit grasslands of a plentiful Gilberto manor, its howl drilling the nighttime.

Inside the manor, a heartbreaking warlock was contemplated.

Doyle then pouted as he downed his brandy, wondering where he had gone immoral about wanting a child dead.

His narrowed eyes lit upon the unobstructed armchair close to the blaze where his missis should be sat looking at him with distrust.

Then teleporting, in a moment of a flash.

Then all the little ghost girls with black eyes are circling me as I could see the tall Slender Man, in the background, this cryptic is very massive and thin with unnaturally long, tentacle-like arms (or merely tentacles,) which he can extend to intimidate or capture prey and pull you in like all the children around him that he did already. His face is white and featureless, as the girls around him are

blacker than midnight but occasionally his face seems different to anyone who sees it. He appears to be wearing a dark suit and tie.

‘He wants my soul.’

The Slender Man is often associated with the shady woodland around us, and or abandoned homes and places, we all can teleport, and were lost in this moment like a dream. Immediacy to the Slender Man is often said to trigger a ‘Slender disorder,’ immediate commencement of paranoia, nightmares, and misconceptions accompanied by nosebleeds. I sometimes get lost in him doing this to me.